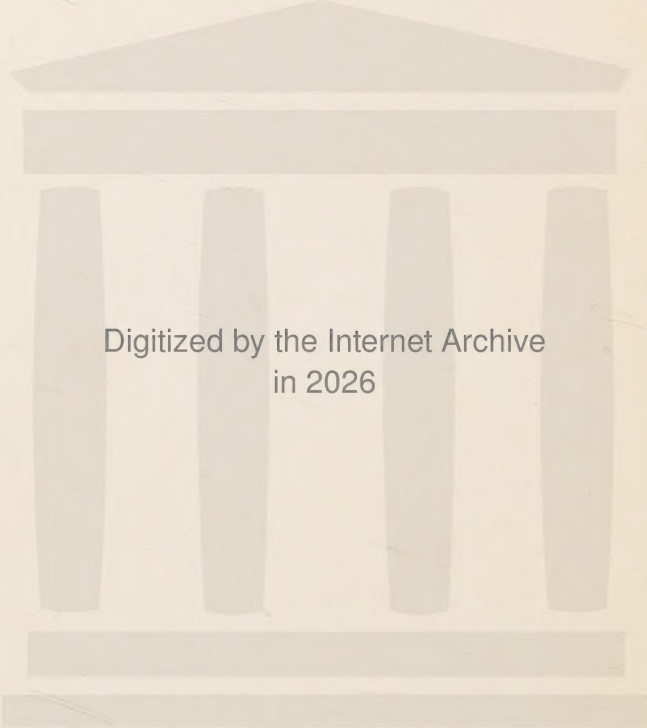


1/- Net.

ABOUT COLLECTING.



By J. H. YOXALL, M.P.



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The ABC ABOUT COLLECTING

By

J. H. VOXALL, M.P.

"We passed from Shepherd's Inn into Holborn, and looked for a while at Woodgate's *bric-à-brac* shop, which I never can pass without delaying at the windows—indeed, if I were going to be hung, I would beg the cart to stop, and let me have one look more at that delightful *omnium gatherum*."

THACKERAY, *Roundabout Papers*.

"God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation."

WALTON, *The Compleat Angler*.

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1908.

To STELLA,
DAUGHTER AND HELPER.

BY WAY OF PREFACE.

SO OFTEN HAVE READERS OF MY ARTICLES IN *LONDON OPINION*, AND MEMBERS OF THE *LONDON OPINION* CURIO CLUB, WRITTEN IN THE KINDEST TERMS TO URGE REPUBLICATION IN PERMANENT FORM, THAT THIS BOOK "ABOUT COLLECTING" MAY BE SAID TO OWE ITS EXISTENCE TO HUNDREDS OF SUCH REQUESTS. MY ARTICLES ARE LIKED, I AM TOLD, BECAUSE THEY CATER FOR ORDINARY FOLK AND NOT FOR MILLIONAIRES, AND ARE WRITTEN CLEARLY AND EXPLAININGLY, OUT OF PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND RESEARCH. SELECTED, REVISED, AND PARTLY RECAST, THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK WILL SHOW THE SAME QUALITIES, I TRUST, AND BE A HELP TO BEGINNERS AS WELL AS AIDS TO COLLECTORS MORE ADVANCED IN DELIGHTFUL PURSUITS. I DO NOT PRETEND THAT THIS BOOK IS EXHAUSTIVE OR COMPLETE IN ITSELF, THOUGH IT MAY WELL SERVE AS A GENERAL GUIDE TO THE "LINES" OF COLLECTING, AND THE WIDE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH THE CLUB AFFORDS TO ALL. THE CHAPTERS OF IT ARE MORE CLASSIFIED AND SYSTEMATIC THAN WAS POSSIBLE DURING SERIAL PUBLICATION, AND I HAVE INSERTED MANY ADDITIONAL LIGHTS AND HINTS.

GOOD FOR HEALTH OF MIND AND BODY IT IS TO WALK AND WANDER IN BY-WAYS OF TOWN AND COUNTRY, SEARCHING OUT THINGS BEAUTIFUL AND OLD AND RARE WITH WHICH TO ADORN ONE'S HOME; OF A THOUSAND SUCH HAPPY AND SALUTARY HOURS THIS BOOK IS A RECORD, AND TO MY KINDLY CORRESPONDENTS AND MY OTHER READERS I WISH THE SAME FORTUNE AND JOY.

J. H. VOXALL.

Kew,

AUGUST, 1908.

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The ABC About Collecting.

SECTION I.

ON BEGINNING TO COLLECT.

A WORD in the ear of the people who "would like to collect if they knew anything at all about it," as they say. Listen. *Seven dealers out of every ten know next to nothing about it now, and knew nothing at all about it when they began!* This is an admitted fact, as a rule; the dealers themselves would

**Collecting an Art,
not a Business.**

confess it to you freely. Collecting is an art, not a business. And the average dealer knows rather less about any one "line" than does the average amateur. Dealers learn what they know from their customers; they have said so again and again.

"I should very much like to collect old prints—coins, and medals—Georgian furniture," say Mr. Brown, Mr. Jones, Mr. Robinson. "*I should like to fill the drawing-room cabinet with good old china,*" say unanimously their respective wives. "But we don't know how," they go on, with one voice—"it would cost a fortune—the dealers would rook us!" My dear Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Jones, and Robinson, I assure you, nothing of the sort.

"It must be so difficult to become a judge!" you say. Oh, no! Nothing is easier and pleasanter than to learn when one hankers to learn. Besides, one learns in bits: one learns to collect by collecting.

"But the real things cost so much!" Do they? People have to buy furniture and mantelpiece ornaments of one kind or another, and it is still a fact that you can buy fine old china for less than the price of china that is fine and new. A roomful of good old furniture, picked up a piece at a time, will cost you less than a roomful of furniture that is both new and as good. And the old things are much the more comfortable to live with.

**Fine Old China
Cheaper than New.**

"But surely all the real bargains have been picked up long ago," says the doubter. Dear would-be amateur, bargains go

**Bargains go
Begging.**

begging in by-streets nearly every day! "But even bargains cost you a lot, to begin with," says the doubter. Do they? Listen again. To my certain knowledge, the following bargains were lately picked up by the same person during one six months, and these are but a few out of many: A miniature of Cardinal

Richelieu, in oils, on copper that shows the patina (or chemical influence of light and air) which only comes with age, three-and-sixpence. A Marseilles plate, worth four or five louis, four shillings. An old silver and onyx snuffbox, two shillings. An Eighteenth century French colour-print, "La Paysanne," four-and-sixpence. A Chelsea china Cupid, three-and-sixpence. A water-colour sketch by David Cox for his famous "Welsh Funeral" picture, half-a-crown. So much for bargains in shillings. When it comes to bargains in sovereigns the chances are better if not more numerous still.

It is true that prices are hardening. So the time to begin to collect is Now. The opportunity can never be more favourable, and it will grow less favourable to the collector year by year. Porcelain, for instance; dealers will tell you that porcelain has paid them better than any other kind of stock of late. This is therefore a good time for buying old china; at any rate, so good a time is not likely to come again. The grumble of the smaller dealers is always that they "can't pick up cheap china nowadays"; they mean the pieces of the less rare makes of china which they used to buy for a few pence each. They assure you that any kind of old china—even chipped—is being hunted for more than ever. If you mean to begin to hunt for it, therefore, you had better begin "right now."

The fact is that the level of taste is rising. You can see that in picture-framers' shop windows, you can see it in the cheaper new-furniture shops of Tottenham Court Road. The number of collectors is increasing rapidly, whether for pleasure or for profit, or for both; collecting is no longer confined to the wealthy or moderately rich, or to the leisured classes. People who hanker to "collect" and do not soon begin to collect, may before long find it too late to collect at any price which their purses can command.

People of moderate incomes, I mean; it is people of moderate incomes who are snapping up the bargains in shillings to-day. I am not writing here for the bidder at Christie's, for the man who can pay £7,000 for a couple of square yards of antique tapestry, and so forth. I am writing for the man or woman in the villa, in the flat, in the area houses in a row—for people of cultivation but not of riches, who must look twice at every pound they spend on unnecessaries, yet who long to surround themselves with beautiful old objects and to bring up their children in an atmosphere of art. It is precisely these who most hanker, yet most fear to begin, to collect, is it not?

As one who belongs to that class himself; who used to hanker and used to fear; who is now an amateur, often purchasing with shillings and but rarely with pounds; who is not a dealer, but buys to keep and enjoy; who, however, has tested the worth of his judgment by "ceding" a few things, each of which cost him a few shillings only, for more than as many pounds; I am asked to chat in these columns with people who hanker to collect delightfully and reasonably, but "don't know how." And as one who has been a fairly general collector, not confining himself wholly to one line or even two, but keeping wide in scope and interest, I may hope

to be able to give hints and guidance to many people of different tastes and "lines."

And I think I know what kind of help the beginner particularly needs. When I began myself to collect, I found that books and

**Help for
Beginners.**

articles on collections and collecting are almost always too abstruse; that the writers of them take too much preliminary knowledge for granted, and are, consequently, to the beginner, rather obscure. There are many initial and fundamental matters—A B C things—about old porcelain, water-colours, earthenware, grandfather clocks, miniatures, prints, pictures, book-plates, metal-work, frames, and so forth, which beginners need to know, yet do not find sufficiently explained in existing books; and there are many J K L things, not to say P Q R things, about collecting which need to be made clear. I hope I can do this, and I almost think I can.

HOW TO COLLECT.

Though you may never have shot or hunted, when you begin to collect you begin to understand the pleasures of the chase;

**Joy of examining
an Antiquary's
Shop.**

the searching in likely places; the spotting the game; the keen, patient following-up; and the kill. There is delight in the mere hunt and search even when you do not buy; fine old Horace Walpole, an eager but often impecunious collector, wrote of the joy of examining an antiquary's shop and finding nothing to purchase.

But after all, "What do you intend to do with the curios when you have bought them?" is an inevitable question. And a good deal depends upon that. Some people collect for the sake of collecting, some for the sake of the things collected, and some for the sake of the profit when they sell.

You may buy a curio to sell again quickly, or buy it to keep and enjoy whilst you live, or to figure as an asset in your estate left behind. I fancy the collector who gets the most pleasure and profit out of his hobby is the man who enjoys his collection as long as he can, and sells when he must, or leaves the things behind him to be sold by his heirs, at three or four times what they cost him.

Collectors are often called maniacs, but you can be a collector in a sane and business-like way. In 1906 a suburban dealer bought

**Buys for
Enjoyment.**

two small leaf-shaped Chantilly dishes for five shillings; he sold them to a collector for a guinea; the collector kept them awhile, and then ceded them to a Parisian visitor for five pounds. A sane and business-like collector buys for enjoyment *plus* the investment. And wise collecting means good investing, whether for speedy or ultimate sale.

That is why it is well to collect pretty freely, if you collect at all. If you begin, keep on. For think of the end. An end comes to every householder, the executors execute, and usually an auction sale is held. If the curios in the house are few, they will be "sold

on the premises" by an ordinary auctioneer. In that case they will probably realise less than they cost their collector; because amateurs and dealers in such things will not be present numerously at the sale.

At such sales on the premises the neighbours or small furniture-brokers buy the few curios for next to nothing, not knowing their real value either in art or cash. At such sales things are lumped together in lots, indiscriminately very often. Then the things which the little brokers have bought for a couple of shillings will be put in their shop windows, and be priced at a couple of half-crowns.

That is how bargains go begging in the by-street shops—little brokers will sell for twice what they gave, as a rule.

But mark the contrast. If the collector has collected freely and wisely, he in his lifetime, or his executors afterwards, can send the collection, or most of it, to Christie's, Sotheby's, Foster's, and so forth; where, in front of many amateurs and dealers, they will be auctioned at something like their proper value. This is why it is wise to collect freely, if at all.

**What Not to
Collect.**

Don't collect poor specimens, badly cracked, soiled, or otherwise seriously injured; though you should remember that repairers can do a great deal.

Don't begin to collect a class of curio at a time when that class of curio has suddenly become the "rage." Pewter suddenly became the rage a few years ago, and people who bought it then had to "pay through the nose." Pewter now is comparatively a drug in the market—ordinary old pewter, I mean.

Don't try to collect a class of curio which is excessively rare. A millionaire might try to collect Oiron ware largely, or Sung porcelain comprehensively, but he would fail.

Don't collect a class of curio which is too common. I know of a mechanic whose cottage is choke-full of collected late willow-pattern earthenware, neither pretty nor valuable.

Don't collect things which you cannot house conveniently—big pictures, huge cumbrous furniture, heavy pedestals, thick family Bibles, and so forth. I know of a collector whose villa is made almost uninhabitable by thirty-eight grandfather clocks.

Above all, don't collect things which, in themselves and for themselves, you cannot like.

"What shall I collect?" is a question each must answer for himself or herself. The list of things which people *do* collect is

**What Shall I
Collect?**

almost endless, and you can choose according to individual taste or fancy. At first it is wise to collect several classes of curios, say, china, Baxter prints, brass, and papier-maché, or any half-dozen different lines. In a while you begin to form your own line; it is difficult to pitch on your best line from the first.

It is good to collect a class of thing that few people at the time are hunting for. It is best to collect (if you can divine what that will be) a class of curio that is to become the rage a few years later on.

It is good to collect things artistic or pretty or dainty, for beauty and style mean value in the last resort. The miniature of

a lovely woman will always sell for twice as much as the miniature of a man from the same brush.

It is good to pick up anything very rare whenever you come across it, even if it is "not exactly in my line," as collectors say. For rarity is the chief element in value.

And remember that next to rarity and beauty comes "oldness" in determining a curio's worth in the market.

The collector's school is the museum. The collections at South Kensington are unparalleled in the world. The Wallace Collection at Hertford House is, for all kinds of French curios, absolute and almost unique.

Study to Collect. The British Museum is marvellously rich in similar ways. In these schools for collectors London stands first among capitals. Buy the catalogues and handbooks which the Museums publish, and study the collections case by case.

There are many books, magazines, newspaper articles, and monographs on curios to be purchased. Every shilling spent on them may mean pounds gained. The wise collector is the well-read and instructed collector. And—a word in the ear again—*through books and museums you can pick up a good knowledge of curios wonderfully soon.*

THE LUMBER-ROOM.

Do you know of a lumber-room? Is there such a thing left in any of the houses occupied by any of your family connections? Villas and flats do not lend themselves to the existence of lumber-rooms; if a six-foot-square hole of a dark closet can be set aside for a box-room, that is the most a dweller in a flat or villa can expect. But the old-fashioned lumber-room in the big old dwelling—the low, long, wide garret, holding the dilapidated or disused household gods that two or three generations of your family people have cast aside—what a treasure-house for a collector that!

Most of such lumber-rooms have been not so much ransacked as emptied wholesale—death, an auction-sale, or a clearance-out when going to another home, have scattered the rich lumber far and wide. That is partly why so many collectable old things come into little brokers' shops, and are procurable there for a song. But if an old lumber-room that you know of, and can gain the right to enter, still remains, enter it, collector, and "have the time of your life," as Americans say.

For there you will come upon things that were cast aside as being out of date, in favour of things that were brand new and fashionable at the time: Georgian things that gave place to Early Victorian things, and Early Victorian things that in their turn gave place to the furniture and knick-knacks that were made or sold in England about the date of the First Exhibition; and then Mid-Victorian articles that gave place to Eastlake or Morris furniture and hangings; and, again, the things that a certain eccentric uncle of yours, or grand-uncle, set store by, but which were cleared out of drawing-room, hall,

and library when a fashionable bride came into the house. And hardly a thing among all these but is worth fishing out of the dust and the tangle, repairing, and restoring to a place of honour downstairs again, or sending to a curio-auctioneer's.

Perhaps you may find in the lumber-room a smallish toilet-set, ewer and basin, soap-dish, and so forth, that gave place to larger

**Cast-off China,
Earthenware, and
Glass.**

ware when the habit of extensive self-washing began to grow among the English, and an ewer which held two quarts of water only became inadequate for its purpose. The old wash-hand stand things then discarded may be Mason ware, or be covered with "Spode clusters," those groups of roses and other flowers of which William Billingsley first set the pattern. The Mason ewer alone may be worth thirty or forty shillings now; the Spode or Davenport "cluster" jug is worth perhaps twenty-five shillings; and if it be, as it may well be, not Spode or Davenport, but Coalbrookdale, or even Swansea, it is worth more. The old "Willow," Wedgwood Queen's ware, Spode "Butterfly," Spode "Pheasant," or Spode "Rose" toilet-sets are all valuable, and even parts of them sell well. The old chipped goblets, tumblers, and decanters, heavy, clumsy, and rough at the foot, that gave place to thinner and more graceful and rounded glassware, blown, not cast—machine engraved, not cut—look for *them* in the lumber-room; they are worth more their weight in silver to-day. That is, if they are of the right period.

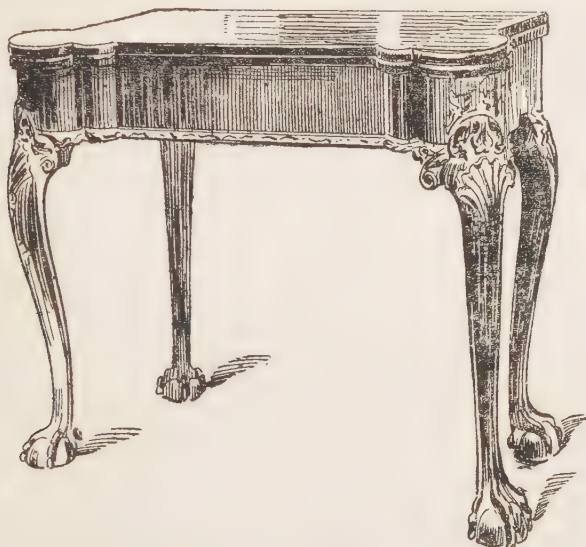


Those Chippendale-style farmhouse chairs, oaken, heavy, square-legged, with only a little decoration on the backs of them—fetch them out of the lumber-room, and, after polishing them with elbow-grease, set them in the hall. That Jacobean linen-chest,

**Cast-off
Furniture.**

with the quaint, rough, simple carving on it, apparently done with an adze, clean it out, rub it up—it is worth several pounds. That old Vauxhall mirror, with the flat bevel, and the silvering spotted, have it out, get it cleverly repaired, and hang it in honour below. That old mahogany bracket-clock, that had to yield place to a gilt

monstrosity made about 1860, send it to a capable cabinet-maker and a trustworthy clock-mender, and you will see how refined it will look and how punctually it will go; seven, ten, or fifteen sovereigns it may be worth when you have spent thirty-five shillings on cleaning and repairing it. That small circular footstool, with embroidered work on it, is worth a guinea. That folding firescreen, made of satinwood with green silk *plissé* in the upper panels—it was cleared out in favour of a cheap Japanese screen—is worth three or four pounds to-day. That bureau, from the top of which the book-



case is missing, that oak bureau with the keys all gone, a drawer or two broken at the back, and no leather on the flap inside, is worth five, seven, ten pounds or more; for look, the original brass keyhole shields and circular drawer-handles are there in all their quaintness; and inside, upon one of the vertical little drawers, is the staple into which a writing-lamp was fixed a hundred and thirty years ago. That pair of handscreens, fantastically shaped and painted with landscapes in oil, the gilding gone from the slim, graceful, turned-wood handles, they are English lacquer, and collectors go wild about good old English lacquer-ware to-day. Even that *papier-mâché* table, small and round, with chessboard squares in the middle of it, and bits of mother-of-pearl inlaid round the down-curving rim, is valuable again; *papier-mâché*, though only fifty years old, is being collected to-day. But I must cut this particular catalogue short.

Let us turn to the light the heap of old framed pictures against that wall. Rosewood frames, satinwood frames, old carved

**Books
and Pictures,
Etcetera.**

and gilded frames—all are worth restoring to honour; and in them what unexpected treasures may you not find! This is a

Baxter print, the mount bearing the patentee's emboss; it is worth two guineas without the frame. Here is a

latish mezzotint, or a fine steel engraving, or a water-colour of the kinds that are snapped up now. That old portrait of John Wesley in the pulpit, an engraving a century old, there are collectors who would buy it at a couple of guineas. Here is a coloured Leighton woodcut of Strasbourg Cathedral; this is an aquatint after Havell; that is an English School oil painting; the next to it is a framed ticket for the coronation of George IV.; the next is a proof woodcut after Millais; then come the early coloured supplements to the *Illustrated London News*, of a kind that are collected already and will soon each become worth several half-crowns. What about this pear-wood frame with the broad-sheet on glass within it? Those tarnished old candlesticks—the brass one with the oval foot is worth half-a-guinea—the pair with the heavily-ornamented fillets are Sheffield plate. And these old books! Why, here is “Dorset Illustrated,” by Pouney, worth 15s.; here is a fine old “Liddell and Scott,” worth 10s.; and here is a “Johnson’s Dictionary,” published in 1755, discarded as being out of date even fifty years ago, but now worth £3. Endless the catalogue indeed.

Nay, if you know of a lumber-room of the old sort, and can get access to it, and have any family claim to what may lurk within it, enter it, ransack it, examine minutely everything in it, and if you are a connoisseur and you *know*, you will be enraptured with the things you will find. What is collecting itself but the art of recognising old gems amidst old lumber, and setting them in honour and careful keeping once more? And what a joy to the eye that *knows*, to come across neglected treasures in this way!

BEWARE!

The things the beginner-to-collect most fears, and has most reason to fear, are the counterfeit curios. Forgeries and facsimiles beset the beginner’s path in every “line” of collecting. And very old birds indeed are sometimes caught with such chaff.

Forgeries have even been bought by the South Kensington Museum, and kept there for a time undetected. I was a member

**Forgeries and
Facsimiles.**

of the Select Committee of the House of Commons which “sat on” the management of the South Kensington Museum ten years ago.

As to counterfeits, we found, for example, that about £200 had been paid for a false piece of “Palissy” ware. It was a platter which looked like a Palissy platter that had been broken and grimed, and then artistically mended with two strips of canvas cemented on, the two strips crossing one another in the middle of the back of the platter. After several months of exhibition at South Kensington, damp caused the strips of canvas to relax. They were taken off, to be put on again more firmly—and there on the back of the platter, just where the strips of canvas had crossed, was the imprint of a modern French maker of facsimiles, whose price for such a platter, new, hot from the kiln, and unbroken, is £10!

Herr Morice Fischer, of Herend, in Hungary, openly and successfully imitated fine European and Oriental porcelain, for

the skill and artistic pleasure of it, with no intention to deceive; but, as was the case with the "Palissy" platter, others have foisted the ware on the unwary as "old." "Imperial Vienna" ware ceased to be made in 1864, but modern stuff, marked with the beehive, is sent out from Austria every year, to entrap the collector. At Tournay, in Belgium, a factory turns out imitation "Sèvres." At Fontainebleau a factory turns out imitation "Sèvres" and "Dresden." In Dresden itself a factory turns out imitation "Dresden," and marks it with the word "Dresden." Sèvres and Dresden ware are quite unsuitable lines for the beginner, or the collector who buys in shillings, but let it be noted at once that true Dresden is never marked with the word "Dresden." The true Dresden has always been made at Meissen; true Dresden (but new, of course) is being made at Meissen to-day, and is sometimes mistaken for the old Dresden which alone is valuable. The danger of that mistake is heightened by the fact that since 1770 the Dresden mark has remained the same, viz., the "saltire swords," that is, the crossed swords in deep blue under the glaze (not painted on the surface), the same for the new as the old.

Of English china, the wares most often forged are "Worcester" and "Chelsea," because "Worcester" and "Chelsea" are the English wares of the kind that best sell.

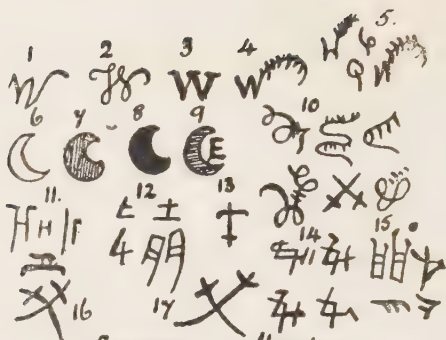
**Counterfeit
"Worcester."**

The forgers mark their clumsy imitations with the Worcester square mark and crescent, or the Chelsea gold anchor. American and other visitors to places like Chester and Scarborough find a "Worcester" fruit-basket offered them for a pound, and a "Chelsea" figure for twenty-five shillings—about one-tenth of a dealer's price for the real things.

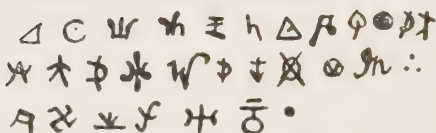
You may know this false "Worcester" when you see it, if you keep the following hints in mind and look at it well. The manufacture is coarse, and the ware is too heavy. The mottled blue (like fish scales) is not the blackish-blue hue, and is carelessly put on. The "Oriental birds" are painted too carelessly. The colour of the square or crescent mark underneath the article and the glaze is too blue—the real old mark is in blue a little blackish. The handle does not neatly join the rest of the article. The gilding is very inferior, not level, smooth, and regularly laid on.

The "Worcester" ware most often forged is the following:

(1) The cabbage-leaf jug, in varying sizes from five to fifteen inches high. It is made in the form of cabbage leaves joined and lapping over each other, a human mask forming the bottom of the spout. Generally it is decorated in under-glaze blue, but sometimes the leaves are veined or edged in green and pink. These jugs were imitated, at the time, by Turner, of Caughley, whose mark, a capital "C," often deceives beginners by its resemblance to the Worcester crescent. Look carefully in this case (page 49), and you will see the difference between the crescent and the "C"; the "C" has a knob at the top of it very often. Then come (2) the Worcester teapot, with a knob shaped like a flower; (3) the milk-jug with a Chinese spout; and (4) the cups, saucers, and plates with fish-scale blue around panels painted in birds and insects. If offered ware of these varieties cheap, have a care!



Square Marks



Workmen's Marks



Worcester—Old Marks.

Chamberlains
Worcester

(In gold)

Chamberlains
Worcester

Grainger Lee
& Co
Worcester



a. Kerr and Binno
b. Special mark.
Both's initials in
left corner, left blank.

Worcester—Later Marks

Worcester "transfer" ware of the Dr. Wall period (5) is often forged. I have a small mug of the kind before me as I write. The porcelain of it is "hard" when it ought to be "soft"; it is too translucent, and light coming through it to the eye looks yellow, when it ought to look greenish. The vignette on it, of a lady and gentleman at tea, is printed in stipples and scraps in a blackish-brown, when it ought to be printed in fine clear-cut lines like an engraving. "Stipple" on china did not come in till 1792, when Messrs. Flight and Barr made "Worcester" ware. Note, further, that few known specimens of real Worcester transfer ware bear a mark underneath them; the forgeries often do.

Pawnshop windows, that once were the very place in which to look for curios, are now quite often piled with forgeries.

**Spurious
"Chelsea."**

Among these the counterfeit "Chelsea" Cupid occupies a prominent place. It is the figure of a boy, with flowers in his hair, a sash of flowers around his nude little body, a basket of flowers in his hands, and flowers growing out from the green base on which he poses. In the counterfeit the flesh is too ruddy; in the real Chelsea Cupid the flesh is white, just tinged here and there with rose. In the counterfeit the face is too perky and knowing, the green of the leaves is brownish (not the soft emerald green of the real thing), and the colours of the flowers are so dull that only a greenhorn could accept them.

How is it, the beginner may ask, that the forgers do their work so clumsily? Because the counterfeits are to be sold at low prices for profit, and to make a perfect counterfeit would run the cost of production up too much. Then (the chief difficulty of all) the counterfeiting is done in "hard" porcelain, and colours on "hard" porcelain cannot possibly be made to resemble the colours on porcelain that is "soft." It costs too much to use "soft" porcelain. I will explain the difference between *soft* and *hard* china in a subsequent chapter.

Yet there are forgeries in "soft" porcelain also. Not far from Oxford Street, I was offered two "Chelsea" figures twelve inches high, perfect and sumptuous, for six pounds—about one-fifth of the value if they had been "real." My finger-tips told me that the porcelain of them was "soft." Then I looked for the anchor mark, which ought to have been present in gold upon such splendid figures. It was missing; there is a law which can be invoked against too-perfect forgeries, and I suppose the counterfeiters dare not add the mark. But most counterfeit "Chelsea" *does* show the mark nevertheless.

"Chelsea" was forged even so long as sixty years back, in Paris. Some of these old counterfeits have now the time-worn look which accompanies the true. But they are "hard."

Forgers of "Chelsea" prefer the gold anchor. Note that this was never used at Chelsea except for very important pieces indeed; you cannot pick up a true gold-anchor piece of Chelsea for a few shillings. If you can buy marked "Chelsea" for a few shillings at all, it will be marked in red or purple with a small anchor.

But remember that much of all the old chinas was never marked—some of the choicest specimens, too. Remember, in

general, that the marks of one period or one fabric have been copied at other periods and other factories, and that the chief thing and the easiest thing a forger does is to imitate a mark. Marks are important and helpful, but they often mislead instead of guiding aright.

In nearly all "lines" there is one almost infallible test of genuineness; it is the workmanship which the old craftsmen put into their achievements; the cost of labour to-day prevents the same exquisite finish and craftsmanship being shown in the counterfeits.

SHAMS AND FACSIMILES.

Is it prints, etchings, or "Old Masters"—stamps, Toby jugs, or miniatures—"old oak" or "Chippendale"—that you are looking for? Beware! There are counterfeits or facsimiles of nearly everything that people collect.

Old Sheffield plate, for instance. Sheffield plate was itself, at first, a counterfeit of Queen Anne and Georgian silver. Instead of being made from plates of silver, more or less alloyed, that could be hall-marked afterwards, it was made of the less costly copper, upon which a thin plate of silver had been laid. By pressure, by hot-rolling, or "sweating" as it was called, the plate of silver was made to adhere to the copper and conceal it, just as "rolled gold" is manufactured for watch-cases and jewellery to-day. Well, to-day they are counterfeiting old Sheffield plate—particularly the upright, oval-shaped tea caddies. Upon nickel a film of powder-silver is spread by electro-deposit, and the result is a curio that may deceive, but is nothing better in itself than the cheapest kind of modern electro-plate. It is better than that in one respect, I allow—because the old shapes and designs which are copied were artistically better than those which Sheffield and Birmingham devise as "something new and elegant" to-day. Remember that "Queen Anne" and "Georgian" in true Sheffield plate refer to the style of the design, and not to the date; no Sheffield plate was made in the reigns of Queen Anne or the first two of the four Georges. If the "Sheffield plate" offered you does not show an outer edge—outer to the main edge of the base, that is—which is palpable to the finger-nail, beware! That outer edge is the edge of the thin plate of silver. If, again, the Sheffield plate offered you shows brassy at the rim, beware! Because usually the rims of true Sheffield plate were doubly guarded by thicker silver. You need not be suspicious of a piece that looks quite bright and highly-polished; it will have been to the "brusher's," as the polisher-up of the old ware is now called. On the other hand, Sheffield plate that shows the copper through the silver, or is badly battered or twisted, is hardly worth collecting, unless it be of a very delightful design indeed. A gadrooned or convex-fluted edge is held to indicate a good style and period of the true manufacture. The sham Sheffield plate is often stamped underneath with marks; marks on the real ware were more rare; and they are actually making the real rolled thing again, too.

Let us turn to that variety of old English earthenware which

is oftenest forged—I mean the jugs made between 1813 and 1851 by Miles Mason and his successors. These jugs are octagonal in shape, and have snake handles. They were made in all sizes, from about two inches high to bedroom-ewer size. They were sometimes painted in rich deep reds and blues, sometimes in vermilion and grey, sometimes in Japanese-like patterns. The Davenports copied them at the time, and such “Davenport” jugs are now themselves worth collecting. But “Mason” jugs are counterfeited by the thousand to-day. The mark most often forged is “Mason’s” surmounting a crown above a kind of scroll containing the words “Patent Ironstone China.” If a jug of this kind is offered you with a companion basin, beware! Unless it be of bedroom size. Note that the forgeries appear to have been marked by the use of a rubber stamp, which, of course, is wrong. They grime the counterfeits, and grind the bases flat and colour them brown; but look at the surface, and if you find no scratches caused by the dishclout, beware! The colours on the forgeries are too fresh, particularly those of the snake handle. Part of the colours on the handle ought to be a lustre-like yellow; in the forgeries it is *too* yellow. The real jugs were extremely well-moulded, in stuff extraordinarily strong. The counterfeits are well-made enough, but of inferior material. Real ironstone is very long-lived.

Quite a trade is driven in old picture frames. In the beautiful old carved-wood frames, which preceded the general use of moulded “composition,” this is legitimate, as is also the purchase of old satinwood, rosewood, and ebony frames for their own sakes, whether round, oval, or rectangular. But what happens nowadays is this: A broker gets hold of a forged print or faked drawing. He finds an old frame to fit it. He covers the back of the frame with old and dirty paper, and a purchaser, noticing the age of the frame and the apparently bygone date of the framing, buys the “fake” for twenty times its value. This is particularly true of miniatures also. A connoisseur buys a real old picture, in an old frame. “I don’t want the frame,” he says, and the broker knocks something off the price accordingly. Then the frame is used as I have just described. The revival of taste has revived the manufacture of round and oval frames in wood and metal. These, with a little sandpapering, staining, and battering, can be made to look “old.” The safest plan is to insist on having the print or drawing or miniature taken out of the frame for inspection before you buy. And this brings me to the topic of forged and facsimile pictures.

Colour prints are forged by the myriad. Either the old plate is touched up, and put in the press again, or a new plate is engraved. Sometimes, indeed, photography is used for the reproduction. French prints of the Eighteenth century have been facsimiled wonderfully in that way. But there are means of certain detection. Coloured prints were produced originally in two modes—(1) by separate printings in colours, one after the other, and (2) by printing in black or brown, and then careful hand-colouring. The true colour prints belong to the first variety. In the originals the stipples or lines in the blue look blue, in the red they look red,

**Mason
Ironstone.**

**The “Old-Frame”
Dodge.**

**Colour Print
Forgeries.**

and so forth, but also the *paper between the stipples shows white*. In the forgeries the stipples or lines show uniformly brownish or black through all the colours, and none of the paper shows white. The original prints which were hand-coloured were first engraved very exquisitely, and, second, tinted with the greatest care; some of our finest old water-colour artists got their living when young by colouring prints. Now, in the counterfeits of this species, the printing is rough (or blurred if the plate be an old one used again), and the hand-tinting is scamped and dull-coloured.

It should be remembered that by photography and "process" very excellent copies and facsimiles of colour prints (and also of Rowlandson and Downman drawings) have been produced by the publishers of high-class books and periodicals, without any intention to defraud, of course. But, framed up as I have described above, these honest copies are often offered as being the real old thing.

The water-mark is a guide to go by; if the print or the drawing shows a dated water-mark in the paper, that usually settles the affair. I know that water-marks have been forged, but mainly for counterfeit bank-notes. If the print or etching or drawing (water-colour pictures are called "drawings" in the trade) be held up to a strong light, a water-mark or part of one can often be seen, sometimes showing a date, or part of a date, which can then be compared with the dates of the life of the alleged artist. If not a date, then the shape of the heavy old-fashioned block letters will indicate something sometimes. After a little practice in observing such defective details as those I have mentioned, one comes to have an "instinct" which at once rejects the false.

DECEIT AND DETECTION.

An interesting collection of counterfeits might be made by a collector of a detective turn of mind; and there is perhaps no better way of learning to know the real thing than by studying the shams. But nobody, I suppose, ever quite escapes being taken in. I said a word or two about Worcester transfer ware in the last chapter. Will it be believed that three pieces of counterfeit "Worcester" transfer were sold as genuine at a front-rank auctioneer's not long ago—that they were bought as such by a dealer of considerable importance—that they were photographed, and the picture of them published in a recent book on old china (of which thousands of copies have been sold) as real examples of "Old Worcester"? When their false pretences were discovered, the vendor said, feebly, that they might possibly be "Liverpool"—a thing quite out of the question.

Will it be believed that ingenious people "fake" such things as sedan-chairs? The South Kensington Museum people bought one, giving several hundreds of pounds for what appeared to be a genuine antique, in which La Pompadour might have crossed the mud of the Place du Carrousel. The panels below the windows of the two side-doors were beautifully painted in Watteau-like subjects, and over the painting was the rich gold-amber tint of "Vernis-Martin," that lovely old glaze the production of which is now as much a lost art

as that of the varnish on a Stradivarius violin. Well, the sedan-chair was proudly set down amidst the old French furniture in the Museum, and all went well until one day one of the cabinet-makers employed to pack and unpack, and be handy-men in the Museum, came by. He glanced at the sedan-chair casually, looked at it again recognisingly, proceeded to examine it carefully, and then said, "*I made that—the last job I was on!*" He had recently been taken into the service of the Museum, and before that had been employed by a dealer to fit the genuine old panels into an otherwise brand-new chair.

There is a fraud not seldom practised on buyers of old silver. Genuine old silver, guaranteed and dated by the contemporary

**Frauds in
Silver.**

hall-mark, is, of course, very valuable indeed.

Three years ago no less than £4,900 was given for thirteen Apostle spoons, each $7\frac{3}{4}$ ins. long, total weight 32 oz. 19 dwt., showing the London hall-mark, the date letter for A.D. 1536, and the maker's mark, a sheaf of arrows. Five years ago three plain upright sugar dredgers about 7 ins. high, with the date mark of 1698-9, fetched £164 odd, or £8 odd per ounce. Well, the dodge is to get a modern copy of a fine old goblet or other large and desirable piece of old plate, fake it a little, and also let into it an old hall-mark and date letter cut from a perfectly genuine, but comparatively worthless, piece of old silver such as a small spoon—not an Apostle spoon, of course. This letting-in of old silver into new can be done with as imperceptible a trace as is left by repairers of fine old Sheffield plate, when the copper shows through here and there, and a skin of silver is "let in" to hide it. The next thing is to "let in" a customer.

But these are skilful and artistic counterfeits. The amazing thing is that the coarsest and most barefaced and ignorant forgeries will also sell. I bought a sham the other day for the purpose of writing about it. It purports to be Wedgwood Queen's ware. Some of the real old ware was imported into Holland plain, to be painted in Dutch style by Delft artists for Dutch consumption. Now mark the sequel. Dutch potters are sending over here sham Wedgwood Queen's ware to-day. The plate now before me is an example of it. But it is a clumsy and obvious sham in every way. It is delft, tin-glazed instead of lead-glazed. Josiah Wedgwood never made delft; he had found out a ware so much more clean, durable and convenient. The sham is painted in delft colours, blue, purple, green, and yellow, in the Dutch armorial style; Josiah Wedgwood never let his painters perpetrate anything so ugly. The sham is stamped with the word "Wedgewood"; Josiah Wedgwood had no second letter "e" in his name. In real Wedgwood marks the letter "o" is often larger and rounder than it ought to be, because the repeated forcing of the pastes through the circle of the "o" wore away and widened the inner curves of the round letters of the stamp. During Josiah Wedgwood's lifetime the mark was nearly always carefully impressed, the letters being, as a rule, clearly and sharply cut; in the sham the impression is blurred, shallow, and almost illegible.

While I am on the subject of Dutch forgeries, let me mention a dodge which has been largely carried on of late in Holland.

Coloured salt-glaze ware is exceedingly valuable. Some years ago Professor Church paid £7 for an enamelled salt-glaze teapot, which he presented to the South Kensington Museum; the other day an Oxford connoisseur had to pay £70 for one like it. Very well, then, what does the Dutch "faker" do? He procures a perfectly genuine piece of old white salt-glaze, plain old Staffordshire salt-glaze, and paints it up in enamel colours, which are fired at a low heat in a muffle kiln. Then the piece comes to England again, to be sold at more than twenty times its former value, as a "fine example of genuine old coloured salt-glaze." A really good judge of old English earthenware, who has given to his native city a magnificent collection of old pottery, was thus deceived not long since. Imitations of old silver toys are largely fabricated in Holland.

Just as there is a whole class of earthenware counterfeits directly and specially made and intended to entrap collectors of Wesleyana, so there is now a new output of "fakes" for the entrapping of American collectors. A fine tall jug—almost an ewer—and a punch-bowl have been placed on the market in dozens and scores quite lately. The jug and the punch-bowl bear the elaborate design of the Shipwrights' Society, together with medallions of George Washington, Franklin, and Lafayette. Democratic and even revolutionary sentiments border these designs, and the whole effort is to imitate those productions of liberty-loving potters and their customers which came into existence here out of the sympathy of many Britons with the American struggle for Independence. I do not doubt that hundreds of American visitors have been taken in by these fakes; though I am told that American visitors are not buying curios so freely as they used to do, and I daresay that is due to the fraud and rapacity by which in former years they have been bitten. The faker in curios is a pest; the dealer who consciously sells these fakes is an enemy to the other members of his trade. If collecting ever dies, it will be because the faker and the dishonest dealer have killed it. I condemn these frauds so thoroughly that I cannot even feel admiration for the skill with which they are perpetrated. Yet very skilful indeed they are.

The surface of these particular fakes is crazed all over, and many beginners consider that the fine cracks which vein the glaze, and are called crazing, are a mark of age. Nothing of the kind; they were in the origin a mark of over-hot firing. Centuries ago the Chinese "crazed" some vases by accident, and then began to turn the accident into "crackle work," as it is called—an ornament and an intentional charm. Rub into cracks in the glaze some ochre or saffron, or sprinkle the wet glaze with bits of flint or brown clay before firing, and the clumsy, unfinished, time-tarnished effect of rough old English pottery is obtained to a large extent.

This particular "fake" Americana ware is transfer printed; the pottery resembles Queen's ware in its cream colour, and it is sold at prices not too cheap. Fifty shillings for the jug and punch-bowl before mentioned was asked me the other day—fifty shillings the pair of them. And in the very next shop I entered I found the fellows to them—facsimiles, defects and all. In this second shop the price asked was £3.

In the ordinary way of trade, and with no intention to deceive—indeed, with every effort, by marks, to prevent a possible deception by others—Messrs. Wedgwood & Sons, Limited, supply to Messrs. Jones, McDuffee, & Stratton, of Boston, replicas of the old Wedgwood ware which illustrated American buildings and scenes—the landing of Lafayette, the arms of the United States, of North Carolina, and so forth.

They are “genuine Wedgwood,” but not “old blue,” in the collector’s sense of the term. Some of them are lying about in dealers’ shops over here. Collectors *need* not be deceived, however. Upon the back of the plates is the legend, “Wedgwood, Etruria, England”—the last word being enough to show that it was added in 1891, to comply with the McKinley tariff regulations. But over and above that appears the indication, “Copyright 1899.” These plates are the most lovely blue printed ware, and worth owning for themselves. This is how they are advertised in America:—

Genuine Wedgwood OLD BLUE Historical Plates

Of famous scenes about Boston. At the back of the plate representing the Emerson’s home is:

“A friend may be reckoned the masterpiece of Nature.”

At the back of the “Washington Elm” plate:

“Under this tree Washington first took command of the American Army, July 3, 1775. Cambridge, Mass.”

At the back of “Old North Church” plate is:

“Paul Revere’s lanterns displayed here 1775.”

At the back of “Bunker Hill Monument” plate is:

Dedicated June 17, 1843.

Height 220 feet.

“Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming. Let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.”—Daniel Webster, 17th June, 1875.

Our series of Historical Plates now includes over 70 subjects, on dessert plates (9 inch), engraved for us by Wedgwood, from picturesque etchings and famous paintings of historical interest to all Americans, printed underglaze on old Blue Wedgwood with the foliage border that has been used by Wedgwood for more than a century. Of local scenes connected with the early struggles of the Revolutionary War, also of literary interest, are:

Faneuil Hall
King’s Chapel
Boston Tea Party
Old State House
Washington Elm
Whittier’s Birthplace
Elmwood, Home of Lowell
Home of Ralph Waldo Emerson

Old North Church
Old South Church
Battle of Lexington
Bunker Hill Monument
Longfellow’s Home
Harvard College
U.S. Frigate Constitution
Public Library

The other subjects are equally as interesting, including Mt. Vernon, National Capitol, Landing of Pilgrims, Independence Hall, McKinley Home, Yale College, Monticello, Return of Mayflower, Niagara Falls. Also portrait plates of Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Cleveland, &c., &c.

The price is 35 cts. each or \$4.20 per dozen.

THE FAR-SEEING COLLECTOR.

I understand that Mr. Carnegie has given £1,200,000 to the Pittsburg Institute for the purchase of pictures. They are to be pictures by, not "Old Masters," but by modern artists who will become "Old Masters" some day. And this raises the sempiternal difficulty of the far-seeing collector. Which of the contemporary or recent productions in the arts will become sought after and highly valuable a generation hence?

I think it is the great dealers who decide what the demand shall be. I believe they meet together, as Parisian milliners and

**Hoppner and
Frith.**

costumiers do, to determine the new fashions. It was the dealers who in the mid-Victorian era made the paintings of Frith and contem-

porary Royal Academicians all the rage; it was the dealers who have so justly rescued Hoppner and Raeburn from neglect. Frith-period pictures have quite properly gone down in the market, Hoppner and Raeburn pictures have rightfully gone up. What artist's pictures will be the next to go up? That is the puzzle. The International Committee of artists who are to select the pictures to be bought out of Mr. Carnegie's stupendous gift will not need to consider future market values; art values will be their sole concern; but, as I have said more than once in this section of advisory chapters, the not-rich wise collector is he who buys for present pleasure and future value, and the question for him is, "What are the works of art now purchasable cheaply which will appreciate in value during the rest of my life?"

Two causes bring about appreciation in value—beauty and rarity. Beauty alone will not cause great "appreciation"; Rembrandt's "Three Trees" is a beautiful etching,

Art and Rarity.

but the oblong piece of thin old paper which contains it would not sell for £600 unless it were also excessively rare. Rarity alone, moreover, can of itself induce appreciation of value; some of the costliest curios are amongst the most ugly. The safe course, therefore, would seem to be to collect things which are going to be rare, yet are, at the same time, if possible, things of beauty which will be "a joy for ever."

In the matter of pictures one cannot tell very well from an artist's beginnings what his future value will be. I have an early volume of *Once a Week* which contains three woodcuts from drawings by Whistler; they are weak, vague, undistinguished. Yet see what Whistler's fame and value came to be. In the same volume there are cuts after Millais, Keene, Lawson, and Sandys far superior to the Whistler cuts; it was easier to know in 1862 that Sandys would be a great artist than to know that Whistler would become a "rage."

The other day I was lucky enough to buy for a shilling a large woodcut by Marc Antonio after Dürer. Old woodcuts of

**Woodcuts as a
Dead Art
Product.**

that period have long been prized, so have "Bewick" cuts. Attention is beginning to be given to the woodcuts by the Dalziels, Swain, Leighton, and Linton, made after drawings

by since famous artists, during the "sixties"—1860 to 1870 and

thereabout. Wood-engraving is now a dead art; the process block, a result of photography and metal, has killed it. Woodcuts of "the sixties" are still procurable for a song. The far-seeing collector will acquire them. For it is almost certain that any fine product of a dead art will become rare. And when to this rarity is joined beauty, as in the case of blocks drawn upon by Birket Foster, A. B. Houghton, Holman Hunt, Leighton, and so forth, one may be sure that appreciation of values in the market will ensue. This is true of coloured woodcuts as well. Most Baxter prints—coloured wood-block prints—are beautiful; and they are also rare, the product of a dead art; therefore they are costly, and appreciate from day to day.

Lithography also is practically a dead art. Like wood-engraving, it is only rarely practised now, and only by artists who take a fancy for "doing a few things"

Lithographs, &c. in lithograph or on wood. Prout lithographs, Harding lithographs, and Roberts lithographs are already valuable; so will all really artistic old lithographs come to be. I possess a lithograph of "Adam's Ale," by W. Hunt, and Hunt lithographs should be (if I may be pardoned) hunted after. Whistler lithographs are already beyond the reach of a moderate purse.

Just as the "process block" has killed the woodcut, so the "three-colour" process has killed the coloured woodcut and the chromo-lithograph. Some very lovely works of art were performed in chromo-lithography, and chromo-lithography, in the style of twenty years ago anyhow, is now a dead art, and worth the far-seeing collector's attention. Some of the lithographs printed in colours twenty, thirty, and forty years ago were facsimiles of water-colour drawings, worked on afterwards by hand; albumen was used for glazing the shadows, and delightful pictures were the result. For a shilling or two apiece you can pick up those old chromo-lithographs to-day; but they are almost certain to begin to appreciate to-morrow.

I suppose there are few art judges who would hold that "process" work is more beautiful than the mid-Victorian woodcuts; or that the "three-colour process" produces often an entirely praiseworthy result. The "colour books," as the guinea volumes produced by the three-colour process are called, have been lately a rage, but I doubt if their vogue will continue. A coloured woodcut and a fine chromo-lithograph are superior to them, as a rule, in line, hues, and finish. But coloured woodcuts and fine chromo-lithographs have ceased to be produced. *Verb. sap.*, therefore, to the far-seeing collector.

The other day I bought for 4s. 6d. that fine etching by Mr. D. Y. Cameron, proof before letter, "Arran." It was published at a guinea, as fine modern etchings usually are. A few years ago Haig's etchings of cathedrals could be cheaply bought; now they have appreciated enormously. The thing for a far-seeing collector to do is to pick up for a few shillings really artistic modern etchings in good state when he comes across them; etching is so beautiful and attractive an art, and the products of it in good states are necessarily so few, that appreciation is sure to follow. But in this, as in all the foregoing suggestions, the first requisite

is an eye for what is truly artistic in the design, as well as rare in the execution.

And these things are perhaps true of the best modern Minton, Coalport, and Worcester porcelain as well. Consider that Chelsea, Bow, and Nantgarw porcelain were all brand-new one time, and had a collector acquired them largely then, how great the pleasure and profit to his descendants!

SOME PRINCIPLES IN COLLECTING.

There are a few principles in collecting which need discussing. So many collectors seem to be going about their hobby without any definiteness of purpose or clear precision of intention that it may be well to devote one chapter to a chat about certain principles, on which a collector should make up his mind before he has been a collector very long. For instance, is it wiser to concentrate or to diffuse? Shall we each stick to one kind or class of curio, or shall we absorb into possession any desirable class or kind or example of curio which may come within our reach?

I know of a house where on the many mantelpieces and consoles stand fifty Swansea-style vases; the owner and collector has concentrated; Swansea-style vases he has collected, and Swansea vases alone. He has known the tense pleasure and excitement of the sole search and the uninterrupted chase; he has refused to be distracted and led aside from the "Swansea-style" trail, by other porcelains, or ivories, or miniatures, or cameos, no matter how interesting and beautiful these be. He has had a reward; he has lived through fifty intensely triumphant moments, he has glowed with fifty first hours of rejoicing, and experienced the pleasure of fifty first days of possession; he knows that he knows all that about Swansea-style vases can be known. He has concentrated; but has he fully gained his end? He cannot become possessed of all the Swansea-style vases that still exist. If concentration be the best rule for a collector, as most writers on collecting say it is, then the collector of Swansea-style vases has concentrated on the wrong "line," for he can never make his collection complete.

Another collector has concentrated on British war-medals and their clasps and bars. His cabinets line his "den," the silver of the medals gleaming amidst the velvet background, and the rich bronze showing up against the colour of the velvet, which is almost black. He possesses, or has a reasonable hope of coming in the end to possess, an example of every medal, bar, and clasp ever struck to celebrate a British battle, siege, or campaign. He has concentrated on a "line" which can be made complete.

But he, also, has missed a great deal. Think for a moment how much he has missed. He has hunted almost daily for many years; into thousands of shops he has gone, and into some of them many times over; and he has sought for war-medals and their bars and clasps alone. I know another house where a Victoria Cross lies

Concentration.

Diffusion.

upon the plush of a curio table beside a miniature by Samuel Cooper, a snuff-box enamelled by Petitot, and a fan that Watteau painted; a marble bust by Houdon stands on a pedestal by Buhl, and a pastel by Quentin de la Tour hangs opposite to a portrait of a beauty by Romney. A row of Thackeray first editions rests on a bookshelf which is adorned by Wedgwood basalt medallions, inlet. A cabinet holds coloured salt-glaze ware, and the folding Chippendale firescreen frames three elaborate old needlework pictures. Water-colours by David Cox and Clarkson Stanfield and Peter de Wint and Girtin hang on the walls, and the jardinières out of which the fronds of palms lift themselves greenly are Mason stoneware, Coalport imitation of Sèvres, old Rouen, and old Imari.

The owner of this house has diffused. When he has gone into a shop in search of Chinese ivories and not found any, he has not disdained to pick up a brilliant "Day before Marriage" Baxter print, or a woodcut after Dürer which happened to strike his eye as he entered. And when his collection sells it will vend better, pound for pound, in comparison with what they cost, than the collection of war-medals or the fifty Swansea-style vases.

Another question for discussion—should a collector aim at what are called "collector's pieces" only, or should he buy any small and unimportant piece that nevertheless has a right to be a part of a complete collection?

Odd Pieces.

Small and unimportant pieces will not sell for much in the end it is true; but then they do not cost much to acquire in the beginning. A collector who aims at possessing examples or an example of every kind and make of old English porcelain, if he cannot acquire a *fine* piece of "Longton Hall," should he despise a Longton Hall leaf bon-bon dish because it is small? In other words, shall one collect in order to have a complete set of examples, or only to have an incomplete lot of fine "collector's pieces"?

These are, of course, principles and questions to be decided according to a collector's individual tastes, but let him decide either one way or the other. Let him avoid half-concentrating and half-diffusing. If he sets out to obtain a copy of each of the two thousand etchings which Wenceslas Hollar executed, let him not stop half-way through and go in for colour prints, because the odds are that his very concentration, while making him very learned in Seventeenth century etching, will leave him ignorant about Eighteenth century stipples in colour, and therefore easily deceived when he "changes his line." Or if a collector diffuses, let him beware of diffusing too much; a house or a collection ought not to be made to resemble the Old Curiosity Shop as Dickens described it, or the rooms of a "Literary and Philosophical Society" in a small country town forty years ago, where the upper part of a mummy rubbed shoulders with an Italian Punchinello, and Crimean relics kept company with Red Indian moccasins and stuffed humming-birds. Myself, I am a diffuser, but I take care not to diffuse too much. Yet I think the diffuser gets more pleasure out of his hobbies than the concentrator does out of his one pursuit, and perhaps he gets more culture and knowledge also.

Then there are the ethics of collecting. Is it fair to give only five shillings for a curio which you know to be well worth a pound? Ought you not, in honesty, to give the broker a pound for it, if you buy it at all?

Is it Fair?

And then, also, ought *he* not to give the pound, or nearly all the pound, to the person from whom *he* bought the curio—for only half a crown, perhaps? And unless he would do that, are *you* bound to give *him* the pound, instead of of the five shillings he asks you? And are a collector's brains and knowledge as much entitled to profit-making as a trader's? A whole chapter would be too little for the discussion of that matter. My own rule is, when asked a price which is not more than the article is worth to me, never to beat the price down before buying. Just this consideration goes to the moral roots of all profits and of all trade.

SOME COLLECTORS' EXPERIENCES.

Correspondents send me most interesting stories of their experiences sometimes. One who was not a collector till then, reading my account of Apostle spoons, picked up at a pawnbroker's two tiny spoons for 1s. 6d. the pair, and an Armada spoon, with an old ship at the end of the handle, for 7s. 6d. The pawnbroker said they were "white ware," but they were silver, and old silver, too. The purchaser has been offered £5 for the two Apostle spoons, and £5 for the other.

A correspondent sent me what follows: A connoisseur arrived as a guest at a country house some years ago, and as it was still early in the evening his hostess asked him if he would like to see his young chums the children before going to dress for dinner.

The "Black Ball."

She took him up to the nursery, and there they found the children in high glee, about to play a kind of cricket with a blackened roundish object which they had found. "Oh, you dreadful children, what *are* you doing?" the mother cried. The connoisseur examined the object which was about to serve as a cricket ball, and he told his hostess that, so far as he could see what it was under its coating of grime, it was a valuable piece of glass. The children said they had found it behind a beam in the attics of the house, which was quite an ancient mansion. After a little more examination the connoisseur told his hostess that he should not be surprised if the piece of old glass turned out to be worth two hundred sovereigns. "And those dreadful children would have smashed it in another minute!" the mother cried. "And we so hard up, and glad to make money of anything!"

She urged the connoisseur to take the piece of glass up to London on his return, and submit it to expert valuation. He declined to do that, but he took a sketch of the piece of glass, and showed the drawing to a dealer, who confirmed the connoisseur's opinion and estimated the value even higher than two hundred pounds. A few weeks later the object was put up for sale at a great auctioneer's, and the mother of "those dreadful children" was present. She heard the bids mount up, "One hundred, two hundred, three hundred and fifty, four hundred, five hundred guineas"—and then she fainted. While she lay unconscious the

bids kept on, and the "black ball," as the children had called it, was knocked down at last for more than seven hundred pounds. For the "black ball" was, in fact, a piece of the earliest European engraved glass known.

It is better to tell the next story as the dealer told it, and almost in his own words, my correspondent says. "I was at Christie's one day," said the dealer, "during a china sale, and the lot up was two vases of old

**A Dealer's
Story.**

Worcester—pink salmon-scale—and you know how rare pink salmon-scale is (illustration opposite page 112). An old gentleman near me bid in the final bids, but he stopped at last, and the vases were knocked down for 750 guineas. I overheard the old gent say to himself, 'What a fool I was not to keep on bidding—it was the chance of a lifetime.' Well, thinks I, addresses of people who could bid 750 guineas for a single lot are useful to a dealer, and I tried to find out who he was. I got his name and address all right, and put 'em down in my notebook for future use. Not long after that I was sent a catalogue of a sale that was coming on at a Rectory in Norfolk—the usual thing, you know, lots of rubbishy furniture, ending up with flower-pots and the garden roller. But close to the end was "Two pink vases," and I got it into my head that they would be pink salmon-scale "Worcester," so down I went to Norfolk to look at the things. Well, they actually were the genuine article! Thinks I, "I must stop this sale at any cost!"—it wasn't to begin for days yet. So I went to the executors, and asked if they could sell the whole by private treaty. They said they could, so I bought the whole show, garden roller and all, for £240. Well, I carried off the two vases at once and took 'em to the old gentleman's. But he had weakened, and he wouldn't buy. So there I was, stranded for the time, and I put the vases in my window, on a glass shelf. A great brewery van comes along the street, and the fool of a drayman lets a barrel roll down bang on to the pavement in front of my shop. Up go my vases, off the glass shelf and down to the floor, one of 'em tumbling all to pieces, and the other cracking. Well, I patched up the least hurt of the two, and ultimately I sold it for £180. But I didn't come well out of that transaction altogether."

Now it so happens that I possess two bits of pink salmon-scale old Worcester myself. I found them in the miscellaneous tray of

Another Find. a small dealer—a cup and saucer, unmarked and unusual-looking—which the dealer could not name, nor indeed could I at that date, for

one learns to collect by collecting. The inner edges of the saucer and the cup are painted with a broad wavy band of pink salmon-scale, and a good many people would take them for Lowestoft. But they are undoubtedly old Worcester. And they cost me exactly half a crown.

FLUCTUATING VALUES AND FASHIONS

There are many collectors who collect because they must; they have formed a pleasant but over-mastering habit, and can never see a chance without taking it. Yet they are often men

and women without much money to spare, who look to the future value of their collections to justify them for the present outlay. Let me say, however, that it is unwise to count too confidently on realising such expectations. I do not mean that a collection always sells at a loss, but values fluctuate and fashions in collecting change. Then, also, in the miscellaneous salerooms to which alone collections that are not of the best or largest can go, the prices obtained are often disappointing. The other day some two hundred "Baxters" were knocked down for sums amounting to £28 only; a pair in the original stamped mounts, full-length portraits of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria (catalogued at a guinea each), fetched 13s. 6d. the two only. Readers of "Notes from the Salerooms" will find frequent evidence that prices and fashions in collecting vary. Take pewter, for example; there are many collectors of old pewter, and a delightful "line" it is to collect.

A few years ago an excellent book on pewter by Mr. Massé was successfully published, and an exhibition of old pewter was held, the catalogue for which cost about a guinea. It began to be the thing to collect pewter. Old pewter grew quite a collector's rage, and high prices ruled in every dealer's shop. Nowadays, poor or fair old pewter is almost a drug in the market; eighteen dishes and plates with crests on them were sold for 35s. the other day, though not in very good condition, it is true. Old pewter is every whit as interesting and attractive as ever it was, with its dull sheen, signs of bygone use, and quaint workmanship, but it is not now a good selling property as a rule. A collector of old pewter may still take all the pleasure he used to do in his treasures, but he cannot count on possessing riches in it at present. Fluctuation has happened; the pewter fashion for the time is past. I daresay it will "come up again," however.

Then there are certain traditional "lines" which a young collector—I mean one who is beginning—may follow, feeling safe enough, because he knew that the last generation of collectors followed them. But he is *not* safe in so doing. It used to be quite the thing to collect Elzevir-printed books, for instance; but they can be bought by the score for half a crown apiece to-day. Forty years ago the "Cruikshank" rage began; Cruikshank prints and books that Cruikshank illustrated were hunted for with zest and almost fury. But the sales and the second-hand booksellers' catalogues show to-day that "Cruikshank" books and prints are rather on the decline.

The same thing is true of contemporary Durer woodcuts, and of some old etchings. You had better own Jacquemarts, Whistlers, Strangs, Camerons, and Hadens than Ostades or Visschers or Breughels. Dickens first editions are suffering a similar drop. Byron first editions are now of very small financial value. Collections of old medals are not worth what they used to be. Antique gems—seals, cameos, intaglios—are, also, to use slang, rather "off." In short, it is not wise at present to collect the things which one's father or grandfather thought best to collect. For there are fashions in collecting, just as there are in Bond Street and Regent Street wear. You may begin a "line" too late, and catch the

decline of the fashion only. Cloisonné ware was the rage twenty years ago, but the other day two quite huge Cloisonné vases sold for only £7 10s. The safe rule is not to collect things because other people have collected them; collect the things you like, and, if you can, begin to collect what people will like ten years from now, or twenty. Pleasure lies in the old "lines," but money in the new. "Baxters" are going to be better than Bartolozzis, for instance.

A good deal of the fluctuation in prices arises from the hard times that dealers have experienced lately. Very unwisely, the

Values in Sale-rooms and Shops. dealers, by their combinations against private bidders in salerooms, and by their "knock-out" system, have rather driven the private buyers away from auction sales; the bulk of the people present in most salerooms are dealers now. And during the past few years the tightness of pocket-money has had the most disastrous effect on the sellers of unnecessaries. Hundreds of curio dealers' shops—the smaller ones—have been closed during the last few years. When trade is bad the sellers of luxuries and unnecessaries are the first to feel it; when trade becomes good they feel the improvement almost the last.

Of course, it follows from all this that the past few years have been a good time for buying; a collector has had the opportunity of acquiring at prices lower than we shall see again for some time, if ever. Many a dealer has had to sacrifice all profit on a past purchase, and even to let it go under the price it cost him, in order to keep house and home together, maintain his wife and family, and pay rates and rent. During the next few years the prices in shops may be expected to stiffen; the prices in all well-known "lines," that is.

One inference I draw from these considerations is that a collector should endeavour to be before his time rather than behind it. Experiment and observation ought after

The Inferences. a while to suggest to him—the beginner cannot possibly get this knowledge—what "lines" are likely to go up in value. That is, if he thinks of values most, financial values. But the *true* collector is he who thinks most of art values, beauty values, historical or biographical values, the intrinsic and not the extrinsic worth. Certain "lines" are steady enough. English porcelain remains steady; Oriental porcelain goes up. English earthenware is on the up grade; early English water-colours and "English School" oil-pictures strengthen. Gothic furniture is weakening, eighteenth-century English and French furniture appreciates. But in all "lines" the chief pleasure and the only true, reliable value is the collector's love for them, his joy in possessing them, and the charm they give to his cabinets, his shelves, or the walls.

However, my aim in these chapters is to write for the collectors who cannot aspire to the "lines" or the pieces which wealth alone can purchase, and to show that outside the limits of the inaccessible there are many opportunities for the modest purse, if it belongs to a collector who can be alert, sharp-eyed, and not too conventional. For such a collector good chances occur daily, and will always occur. The very fluctuations help him.

Buying curios is one thing, but for a collector to sell them when he changes his "line," or for other reasons desires to part

**On Selling
Curios.**

with his collection or some portion of it, is quite another matter. The fact is that a collector may take a fine piece or two to quite a string of dealers, one after another, and find himself offered very little, even by the most enterprising. It is not that the curio may not be valuable. What a dealer has to consider is how long it may be on his hands; how much sunk capital without interest accruing it may represent; and what are his standing charges for rent, rates, insurance, service, advertisement, and depreciation. Consequently, the dealer must buy very cheaply whenever he can. His best chance of buying very cheaply is not at an auction sale, but when a collector comes into his shop and offers to sell him a curio or two. The dealer knows that a purchase may be on his hands a long time. A collector who goes past a curio shop time after time will see the same curio in the window time after time. Five years ago I saw a well-known dealer buy at Sotheby's a fine bit of "Chelsea," decorated with an architectural design in green. He gave £10 for it, and put it in his window. It is in his window yet.

A collector may sometimes get an auctioneer to put a few pieces into a sale of the contents of somebody else's house or of somebody else's collection. But auctioneers are quite properly rather chary of that. And, unless a reserve price be set on the objects, they may sell for next to nothing; while, if a reserve price is fixed by the owner, the object may not sell at all.

Advertisement in papers with "curio" sections is a method which the collector who wishes to sell may use to much better purpose than the foregoing. But even advertisement does not always provide a quick and certain mode of disposing of curios at something like their value, estimated reasonably. I had long seen that what is required is a method of exchange between collectors who wish to buy and collectors who wish to sell, at prices not inflated by dealers' necessary profits, or depreciated by dealers' heavy standing expenses; such as the *London Opinion* Curio Club provides.

THE COLLECTOR WHEN IN PARIS.

Collecting adds another joy to a holiday abroad, and dealers who are connoisseurs regard a trip to the Continent as quite a

**Holiday
Pastime.**

business matter. As a good many readers of these articles will be visiting Paris sooner or later, let me convey some hints and information likely to be of use to them, for Paris abounds in museums and galleries where they can study, and in shops where they can buy.

The region near the Place de la Bastille, the neighbourhood of the Temple and Place des Vosges, the district of Montmartre, the quays on the south of the Seine, and parts of the Quartier Latin are capital hunting-grounds for the collector who wishes to buy in francs. For the buyer in louis there are the Rue de Chateaudun, the Rue St. Lazare, and the Rue la Boetie, all in a

line, the Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, the district near the Palais de Luxembourg and, the whole of the Quartier Latin, the streets near the Place de l'Etoile, and the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. For all collectors there is the closely-packed district which begins on the south side of the Seine opposite the Louvre, extending there from the Pont de Solferino to the Pont Sully, and reaching up the hill by a hundred streets and cross-streets to the Palais du Luxembourg, the Odéon Theatre, and practically as far as the Boulevard du Montparnasse.

All along the parapet of the river wall, on what may be called the "Surrey side" of the Seine, there are boxes, made to fit the top of the parapet and cover it, and to close and bar and padlock up at nights. "Les Quais," as this mile or so of boxes is called, is a

happy hunting-ground for the collector who has merely francs to expend, or even only centimes. Books are the principal contents of these boxes, but one also finds in them pottery, porcelain, enamels, cameos, prints, pictures, water-colour drawings, war-medals, netsukes, daggers, and what not. Many a bargain in English curios has been picked up there for next to nothing. English books in particular are to be picked up there agreeably, for their extrinsic value is usually unknown to the owners of the book-boxes, who are, however, pretty acute about books and prints which are French. An hour or two on these "quais" is a pleasant time for a collector; the sun shines, the leaves wave overhead, the Seine sparkles, box after box invites you, and there is the continual hope and excitement of a "find."

In every street, almost, of the maze of old streets which spreads up the hill from the "quais" there are shops to delight the collector. You will not find much

The Streets of the Latin Quarter.

English porcelain or pottery there, perhaps, though once I found a Derby biscuit figure of Falstaff for a louis, and once a Whieldon figure of Venus and Cupid for twelve francs. But there are English prints and curios to be found, and, apart from purchase entirely, it is quite an education to note the kinds of curio which the French themselves collect; the impression one gets is that their range and choice are smaller than the range and choice which a collector has offered in London. Besides, by studying in these French shops the appearance and style of French porcelains, prints, miniatures, pictures, and furniture, one learns to know them when one sees examples of them in England, and to know them again here often means the opportunity of a good bargain.

For such study purposes only, however, the collector visiting Paris will do best at the museums there. The great galleries of the Museum of Porcelain at Sèvres afford a

The Museums.

splendid means of education in almost all chinias from almost every land; the Louvre is rich in opportunities for curio study; the Chalcographie there exhibits engravings, the Collection Grandidier exhibits Chinese and Japanese porcelain, the Pavillon de Marsan is full of the finest possible things in all the industrial arts, and the Musée des Dessins shows more than two thousand drawings by Old Masters, the Galerie d'Apollon has magnificent enamels, gems, and precious

metal-work, the Sallés du Premier Etage are rich in pastels and miniatures, the Sallés Louis XIV. contain a fine collection of old furniture, and, of course, the collections of pictures are among the most striking and extensive in the world.

The Musée de Cluny, in the Latin Quarter, contains more than eleven thousand examples of mediæval objects of art and craft work. Brass, iron, and other metal objects of art workmanship are here in plenty, and upstairs there is a fine collection of French, Flemish, and Dutch porcelain and earthenware of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth centuries, as well as a full display of Italian majolica, and of tapestries. The exhibition of works in ivory there is particularly rich.

The Musée Carnavalet, in the Quartier du Temple, contains a fine display of French Revolutionary pottery, a collection of snuff-boxes, and many paintings, drawings, and engravings.

The Musée Guimet is full of fine Oriental porcelain, pottery, and other curios. The Musée Galliera consists of a large miscellaneous collection. And the Paris guide books, while telling you the way to these museums and galleries which I have mentioned, will tell you of others, less important or less general, which deserve attention from a collector who wishes to study particular branches of the arts and crafts.

At Chantilly, too, about a score of miles out of Paris, the Château presents a fine collection, which ought not to be missed. "Chantilly" was perhaps the most delightful porcelain ever made in France.

The collector should study Sèvres porcelain, but he should not expect to pick it up cheaply in Paris. Perhaps no other china has been so often forged, or so successfully. As I have written before, Sèvres is not a good line for a beginner or a collector who cannot buy with scores of guineas. Rouen ware, too, of the old period, is frequently imitated; so is "Strasbourg" and "Marseilles." But there is little fear of finding English fakes offered you in Paris. So little English china is on sale there now, that the tendency is to ask twice the price it would fetch in England; but the demand has not yet there encouraged fraud.

THE CURIO THIEF.

The number of collectors increases every week, but the number of curios available for collection seems to diminish. Dealers and brokers grumble that they can no longer buy cheaply, and say that curios are absorbed into a hundred times the number of private collections that used to exist. "Curios are so shut up nowadays," they say; and they add that "most of the best things are shut up in public museums, and are ungetatable." In steps the curio thief.

The curio thief is not exactly a modern variety of rascal, however. He has long existed. In the past he was usually a collector himself. I know a censor of modern morals who says that collecting relaxes the moral fibre. That is not true, of course, but it is true that picture galleries, and great public libraries in particular, have suffered from pilfering collectors

who stole, being unable to buy, at frequent intervals during the past three hundred years. Typical of a certain kind of monomaniac was the otherwise honest old gentleman who possessed twelve of the thirteen "Cries of London," by Wheatley, and could never find the thirteenth offered separately for sale. Going into an auction-room one view-day, he saw a complete set loose in a portfolio. The collecting passion was too strong for him, he took out the thirteenth, rolled it small, put it under his overcoat, and walked away with his booty, rejoicing.

Lord Nelson's medals for the battles of St. Vincent, the Nile, and Trafalgar were bought by the Nation in 1895, and placed in the Painted Hall at Greenwich; they were stolen shortly afterwards, and have never been recovered. More notorious even than that was the theft of Gainsborough's portrait of *The Duchess of Devonshire*. Robert Dighton, the clever portrait etcher, abstracted many valuable prints from the British Museum (among them Rembrandt's rare *Coach Landscape*). A great theft of cameos and intaglios took place at Paris in 1780. Most of these larcenies were committed out of love and coveting of the objects stolen, no doubt. But the burglary of Mr. Wertheimer's treasure-house the other year had a different motive, a mercenary aim. And so had the systematic robberies of works of ecclesiastical art of which news lately came from France.

The mercenary curio thief is doubly a pest and a villain; for he not only steals, he usually destroys. Unable to sell, for fear of detection, he melts down the chased and graven gold of snuff-boxes, breaks off the jewelled frames from the tell-tale miniatures (which to hide his theft he burns), cuts up into two or three the great picture he has filched, and irretrievably spoils it, in the hope of selling parts of it undetected. Not only common honesty, but all the pleasure of the collector, stand invoked against the curio thief. The other day I spent an hour or so in the shop of an *antiquaire* in a Belgian city. Collectors kept coming in and asking for brocades and embroidery; I saw the stuffs and the old needlework handled, I examined them myself. I think I can safely say that every bit of the brocade and all the embroidery had come from ecclesiastical vestments, that were probably stolen from churches. Cope and alb and chasuble had been pilfered, or bought clandestinely, and the larceny must be covered by cutting up into strips and fragments, of little separate value, the wonderful old work. Once when I was at Holyrood, and, after admiring the tapestries in Queen Mary's rooms there, had passed on with the guide, an outcry arose a few minutes later; the guide and I returned to the rooms we had quitted, and there in the tapestry gaped a large hole; somebody had cut a square of the tapestry out, pocketed it, and sneaked away.

The news which came from Paris of copes and chasubles, pictures and monstrances, and other church treasures stolen

**The French Curio
Thefts.**

or clandestinely bought, to sell to wealthy dealers, is perhaps the most notorious but not the first example of the kind. I know a little provincial town in France where the museum, bequeathed by a former resident, is full of most wonderful carved wood

from churches, that could never have been acquired in honest ways. That is only one case out of many. So rare and so dear and so coveted have become the works of art which honestly come into the market that theft, organised and wholesale theft, has been going on. In every cathedral and some other large churches in France there is a room called the *Trésor*. A visitor pays a franc or so to enter it, and, under charge of the sacristan, admire the ancient vestments adorned with needlework of inconceivable delicacy and beauty, the reliquaries of gold studded with gems, the antique statuettes in carved and painted wood, the rings of dead bishops, the croziers, and so forth. These *Trésors* have been robbed a good deal.

Listen to the reported confession of one of the principal robbers. "A wealthy man came to me and proposed a plan for securing church treasures. I stole a magnificent statue from a church in the Puy-de-Dôme. Two days after it was in Paris, in the hands of M —, who sent it to England. I am the author of many similar thefts. I used to go to London with the Paris antiquaries to sell the stolen goods. I stole the — reliquary. There was an American purchaser waiting for it to be sent to him by a London agent. By arrangement a motor-car called for me. I stole the reliquary and it was taken in the motor-car to Paris. Thence it was sent to Marseilles, to evade suspicion, and afterwards to London. I got £340 commission."

"WHICH IS OLD CHINA."

"I should like to collect old china, if I knew what china to collect," is often said. "What do you exactly *mean* by old china?"

Let me try to answer that question. All really fine china is worth acquiring, but there is a good deal of really fine china which will never in our day be, in the collector's sense of the word, "old." Roughly speaking, collectors' old china is china that was made before the date of the Great Exhibition of 1851. I adopt that limit of date because it shuts off from modernity practically all the chinas which people collect; though the best old china is a good deal older than that.

But, practically, that date encloses backward all the most desirable chinas of the Orient, the European mainland, and England. Those are the three classes: *Oriental* (the wares of China and Japan); *European* (the wares of Germany, France, Holland and Denmark); and *English* (the native wares, with which collectors in this country have most to do). By another generalisation let me explain that "old china" usually means china made before modern commercial ideas and practices were applied to china manufacture; before china became in general and popular use; before division of labour and machinery cheapened it so; before it ceased to be a whim, an artistic hobby, or a luxury. Fine and costly china made since 1851 will be treasured and become more and more valuable, perhaps; but, in the above sense of the word, it is not yet "old."

"Old china" may also be defined as the remnant of ware that has ceased to be made. Chinese and Japanese chinas have never ceased to be made, but the old quality and finest styles of them have. The same thing is true of the ware of Sèvres, and the ware of

**Another
Definition.**

Dresden and Copenhagen. When European porcelain-making ceased to be the Royal hobby of the Kings of France, the Electors of Saxony, and the Kings of Denmark, and ceased to be carried on irrespective of commercial considerations at the cost of Royal pockets, it began to be commercialised and to be carried on to "pay." It was then that the old quality and finer styles ceased to be made, And, similarly, commerce ruined the art in "Oriental."

But the line of demarcation in English china must be differently drawn. No Royal patronage and subsidies ever assisted English porcelain-makers; they were always men of business. What divides old English china from modern English china is, first, the change

**English Old
China.**

in the material, and, second, the dying out of the old makes. Old English porcelain was, with two or three exceptions of makes, "soft." (So was some old French china, I know; but this is a chapter, not a treatise.) In the three cases where English porcelain-makers in the eighteenth century made "hard" china, the making of it lasted a few years only. About the year 1800, Josiah Spode, the younger, set himself to "improve" English soft porcelain by making it "hard," like Continental porcelain. He did it with a vengeance—he "improved" it out of existence; he mixed an unfeeling odious substance called felspar into his paste, and thereupon, so to speak, English soft china fainted, gasped, and gave up the ghost. With some exceptions, therefore, English old china is "soft" china, and "soft" china has long ceased to be made, and therefore the remnants of it still found in shops and cabinets and cupboards are collectable and valuable.

The exceptions to that last definition are the "hard" wares made at Plymouth (between 1767 and 1771); at Bristol (between 1770 and 1781); and at New Hall (between 1781 and 1810). I do not add "Lowestoft"; it is a mistake to suppose that "hard" porcelain was ever made at Lowestoft. The wares of Plymouth, Bristol, and New Hall until 1810 were "hard"; Lowestoft ware was "soft."

I have to draw my limit as late as the year 1851, because some "soft" china was still made at Coalport within a few years of that date, and all "soft" English china comes within the definition of "old," as having ceased to be made. At Nantgarw "soft" china was made till 1819—perhaps later; at Swansea till about 1824. I must bring in "Rockingham," too, a hybrid china made between 1820 and 1842. The rather "soft" chinas made at Derby up to 1848 and at Worcester until 1847 have also a right to be considered, in all the above senses of the word, "old." I quote from two great authorities, Professor Church and Mr. William Burton, when I add that from 1750 to 1780 was the best period of English old porcelain; and that from 1800 to 1850 the English wares were at the lowest level in taste. From 1851 onward, the modern Coalport, Minton, and Copeland, like the new Worcester and new Derby wares, have obtained world-wide recognition, have often been magnificent, and are valuable in

themselves; but the time has hardly yet come for considering them "old." Perhaps there are far-seeing collectors garnering such chinass to-day, for their time of rarity and "oldness" will ensue.

"Old Oriental" is the most valuable of china, unless it be "old Dresden" or "old Sèvres"; but "Oriental" is like an ocean for a

**Collect English
China.**

collector to navigate, and "old Sèvres" and "old Dresden" require long pockets indeed.

Besides, modern Oriental, Dresden, and Sèvres chinass still come into this country, to confuse the beginner. The beginner will, then, do wisely to confine himself to "old English," as above defined. He will find more pieces to collect, and he will buy them at more reasonable prices, than if he tried his hand at the other classes of ware, the Oriental and the Continental. To people who know nothing of old china, "old china" usually suggests "Dresden," "Sèvres," or "Chelsea." Do *not* look out for "Dresden" or "Sèvres"; but, if you do, remember that it is "Dresden" made before 1796 and "Sèvres" made before 1770 which are the really valuable and artistic wares.

From 1774 to 1796 (and after) Count Marcolini managed the Dresden manufacture. A star between the crossed swords indicates

**Some Hints on
"Old Dresden"
and
"Old Sèvres."**

his period; "Dresden" made before his period has to be judged from other indications than the mark. "Old Sèvres," made before 1770, may be judged by the marked date-letters, A for 1753 down the alphabet to R for 1770; but

remember that Sèvres date-letters are frequently forged. Later "Dresden" and "Sèvres" also, down to 1851, again, may be regarded as "old," but it is not so valuable as the earlier examples.



**Old Dresden.—Sold at Christie's for
1,150 Guineas.**

People who insure against burglary should make quite sure that the terms of their policies cover the case and the extrinsic value of their curios. The only certain way

**Insurance of
Curios.**

of securing that is to have an inventory of the collection taken, and the approximate value stated in a written list, made and vouched for by some accepted connoisseur or expert. The collecting rage increases so much that before long it will pay a burglar better to carry off



Worcester Hand-painted Porcelain.

(Page 46.)



Worcester Transfer-Printed Porcelain.

(Page 40.)

marketable curios than to steal rings and bracelets and spoons. I am afraid it will be found that the ordinary burglary insurance policy only covers cost value, however; and thus, if you gave a pound for an object worth twenty pounds, and it is stolen, only a pound from the insurance company will you get. That is, if the selling value is not assessed in the way I suggest beforehand, and the amount of it covered by the policy and the premiums.

In any case, it is wise for a collector to keep a register of his purchases, showing the description, date of purchase, and price paid for each article, and its number, if he numbers his articles, in the collection.



SECTION II.

"SOFT" AND "HARD" PORCELAIN.

I HAVE been asked to describe, more plainly and fully and exactly than has hitherto been done in print, the differences between "soft" and "hard" old china. I will try. But it is a difficult thing to do.

In the *Cornhill Magazine* for December, 1906, I wrote, in the course of a long article on "English Old China," as follows:—

"By the mere touch, by blindfold touch, you can tell it from Chinese or Japanese or European ware," but the point is, *how* does one learn to know it by "mere touch, by blindfold touch"?

I went on in the same article to explain that a little: "The paste is the body and the glaze is the skin. The glaze is 'soft' glaze; the use of too harsh a dish-clout may scratch the lucent surface." That often helps. Hold the piece of china you are examining at an angle to the light and look for the marks of old scratches.

Then I went on: "The paste is 'soft' paste; the blade of a penknife can abrade it." That helps again. Scratch the piece of china with a steel point or file and see if it leaves a mark; if no mark is left the paste is probably "hard." You do this best at the base, or on the edge of a rim. "Where at the base of a cup or mug or bowl the rim has been ground flat and bare of glaze, the finger-tips feel it smooth and soapish." That helps again. The feel of jadestone, soapstone, or even a not quite dry, smooth piece of soap, gives you a sensation similar to the feel of "soft" china. But you must not mistake for that the feel of a part which is smooth because of glaze on it.

"To the hand or lip this English china offers a warmer, tenderer touch than the hard and chilly Chinese ware or the Saxon." That helps. Oriental or Dresden ware, or even modern English china, strikes colder, and, if you press it, *feels* compacter than Crown Derby does, or Chelsea, or Old Worcester. And,

again, "Soft china is porous; colours meltingly sink into the paste, or 'run' in the glaze and cloud it. 'Hard' china has an icy, haughty brightness; on the hard glaze of Dresden or Sèvres the enamels curd and lie congealed, unpenetrating—flat, not lustrous. But in cups of Chelsea and saucers of Swansea translucency and hue combine, as in the petals of a rose." To that I may add that if you hold "soft" china aslant to the light, you will see the glaze shine as much over the coloured portions as over its white portions; in "hard" china the glaze over the painted parts is rather dull.

And again: "In 'soft' china a broken edge may be rough and lump-sugarish to the look and touch, but will not mark a fingernail rubbed across it." If you are testing a piece of china for softness, press it with the finger-tips, scratch with the fingernail some part of it which is unglazed, and if there be a rough edge in it rub the edge across the thumb nail.

I was talking to an artist-workman who repairs old china. He said: "With 'soft' china *I can see through the glaze*, like looking through the glass of a miniature frame into the picture." That helps again, because the glaze of English "soft" china was the

The Glazes.

next thing to glass, and the colour of the paste *does* show through it. This artist of a workman said: "I can see the creaminess of the paste through the glaze of 'soft' china. If the china is 'hard' the paste has a bluish tinge." Yes, it often has that "touch of the blue-bag" (which one sometimes sees in starched linen) if it be English "hard" china from Plymouth or Bristol, or New Hall. But not always—the best "hard" chinas are usually the whitest, too. Yet there is a difference in their whitenesses—there is the bluish white, the chalky white, and the snowy white among "hard" chinas. The usual colour of the paste of English soft china, seen through the glaze, is rather an ivory white, or a creamy white, and that is one way to know it.

Another thing to know it by is the way the glaze was laid on. In "hard" chinas the paste is covered with the glaze, for both were "fired" in the kiln together; the result is that the glaze seems an integral and inseparable part of the paste. In "soft" china the paste was "fired" first, and alone; then the liquid glaze was brushed over the surface, like varnish; and then the piece went into the kiln again. The result was—you may easily see it, especially in old "Worcester"—that often the glaze did not cover the whole of the piece; some of it, usually the base or part of the base was left, so to speak, unvarnished; often blobs of glaze show shiny upon and amidst expanses of uncovered paste; you may easily see these blobs, especially on "Bow."

Sometimes the glaze of "soft" china was "harder" than the paste. That had to be so with very "soft" paste; just as a custard-glass holds the curded soft stuff inside it together. Don't wholly go by the scratchiness or the unscratchedness of the glaze, therefore. Some people suppose that if the gilt or colours be worn off a good deal it denotes "soft" china. That is unsafe, by itself; it may only denote a "hard" glaze on which the colours were painted, or the kiln not hot enough in which they were fired. Professor Church says: "Ascertain by a file the hardness of the

paste on some part of the vessel free from glaze, and do not be content with any signs of attrition which the glaze may show."

Then Professor Church (our first and ablest scientific writer on what is really a science) goes on: "The appearance of fractured surfaces of the two kinds of paste generally differs a good deal. The hard paste presents a nearly smooth, curved surface, with a moderate lustre and slight signs of a granular or crystalline texture. The soft paste is of irregular fracture, presenting a dry, rather dull, and non-crystalline surface." The difference between sugar-candy and lump sugar, in that respect, nearly.

Mr. William Burton, F.C.S., himself a practical potter, writes that the "hard" porcelains of the Orient, Germany, France, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, &c., "are distinguished by their whiteness, hardness, and complete vitrification. The body is so hard that it cannot be scratched by a steel tool, and if by chance it becomes chipped or shattered it exhibits a distinct conchoidal" (or shell-like) "fracture, resembling that of a flint pebble." But the English old chinas "are never so white in tint; they fritter away before a steel tool; and their fracture is distinctly granular, resembling that of loaf sugar."

In learning to know "soft" china, use a magnifying glass and apply all the tests mentioned above. After a period of practice you will come to need no other test than your hand and fingernail.

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN COLLECTING.

Collectors of English porcelain, earthenware, enamels, and so forth, owe a particular debt of gratitude to five men and a woman, who changed the whole course of English taste in collecting about fifty years ago. What English collectors used to gather together on their shelves and in their cabinets before then may be judged by a visit to the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields. There a visitor will find Greek urns, Gothic corbels, classical casts, Etruscan pottery, a quantity of intaglios, large Chinese porcelain, the Boydell Shakespeare, old busts, Egyptian sarcophagi, cinerary urns, mediæval tiles, old stained glass, and so forth. These were collected by Sir John Soane up to the year 1837, and they typify the kind of collection which used to be the convention and the rule: fusty, classic, pedantic, and exotic.

If now the visitor will enter the little square room at the British Museum where old English china and earthenware are enshrined; if, passing thither, he will note the cases of Battersea enamels; and if, passing out of the little square room, he will enter the long gallery to which it is the ante-chamber, and gaze at the jasper, Queen's ware, and Lambeth delft which are there displayed, he will realise the change, and see what glorious fields began to be opened to collectors forty and fifty years ago. If, then, the visitor will enter the long gallery at the South Kensington Museum, where the Schreiber bequest of porcelain, pottery, and enamels, with the other gifts and examples, are exhibited, he will realise more fully what the five men and a woman did for the

pleasure and the hobbies of so many of us, in studying, collecting, naming, describing, and cataloguing works of Georgian English art that until then had gone without much notice.

The five men and a woman I mean were Lady Charlotte Schreiber, Mr. (afterwards Sir) A. W. Franks, Professor A. H.

The Benefactors' Names. Church, Mr. J. E. Nightingale, Mr. H. Willett, and Mr. Soden-Smith. Before their time, it

may be said with practical accuracy, Wedgwood ornamental ware and Chelsea porcelain were almost the only indigenous ceramics known to the collecting world. Wedgwood had been a great figure for half a century, but the names of Toft, Dwight, Elers, and Whieldon were hardly known. Rich folk, from 1745 onwards till 1770, when the china works at Chelsea ceased to operate, had bought "Chelsea" figures and vases for their mantelpieces, and Chelsea services for the dessert and tea tables; but they had bought such articles, just as the well-to-do folk are now buying fine modern Worcester, Coalport, and Minton, for use and wear, not for connoisseurship and the sake of the art in them. Such "Chelsea," like the old "Worcester" and "Crown Derby," usually occupied the butler's pantry or the parlour-maid's cupboard in great houses up to fifty years ago, not the cabinets, the curio tables, and the hanging frames. It was the five men and a woman whom I have named who altered all that. They knew each other as fellow-collectors—"maniacs," other people called them—they showed each other their purchases, found out ceramic history and biography, compared notes, wrote articles, and planned a big book on their hobby. It was they who began and carried out most of the research upon which almost all new books on English ceramics are founded even to this day. Just as almost all the "new books" on Oriental porcelain are founded on the epoch-making book by old Jacquemart, so most of what is put into the ordinary books to-day may be found, in identity or in germ, in the writings or researches of the six collectors I have named.

Mr. Franks was Keeper at the British Museum, with a salary of £800 and a private income of some thousands a year. He spent about £3,000 a year in making his collections of porcelain pottery, enamels, intaglios, &c., and bequeathed nearly all of them to the nation. Professor Church was then Professor of Chemistry at Cirencester, and in the rural parts thereabout he found a happy hunting-ground for Whieldon and other old Staffordshire ware, particularly salt-glaze. What Mr. Willett collected may be magnificently seen in the museum at Brighton. Mr. Nightingale made learned researches into the early history of the Chelsea china works. Mr. Soden-Smith, a specialist in salt-glaze, was curator of the Art Library at South Kensington. Lady Charlotte Schreiber began the study a little later than some of these, but devoted to it enthusiasm, energy, study, and wealth.

It was Sir A. W. Franks who exploded the traditional idea that the kind of Oriental porcelain long called "Lowestoft" had ever anything to do with Lowestoft at all. Professor Church's books on "Eighteenth Century English Earthenware and English Porcelain" (one shilling each at the Victoria and Albert Museum), published first in 1884 and 1885, were, and remain, the most

erudite, scientific, concise, and enlightened works on those subjects. The splendour and magnitude of the gifts to the public which came from Lady Charlotte Schreiber's generosity can hardly be over-estimated. So that we owe it to these six that English porcelain, pottery, and enamels are the delightful study and pleasant quarry for the curio-hunter which they are to-day.

Fifty years ago old English china and earthenware of finest quality were to be had at prices which might make a collector sinlessly envious now. So few people "knew,"

A Catastrophe. so few were "picking up," so few collectors had left the old paths and were following the new. The few who then were keen on the new lines organised and supplied an exhibition of English ceramics, in the Alexandra Palace, at Muswell Hill. Professor Church, for instance, sent some hundreds of the finest earthenware figures, "Wedgwood" specimens, and "salt-glaze" pieces ever seen. A catalogue, full of errors, but also full of enthusiasm, had been printed in proof, and all was ready for the opening of the Palace.

A workman sitting on a rafter or beam of the dome dropped smouldering tobacco or a burning match into a hollow, where shavings and papers had been allowed to lie. Fire burst out; the great hall was hung with floral festoons made of waxed paper, and flame ran from one end to another in almost a minute. The building blazed and fell in; and thus the first great collection of old English potter's ware was smashed, scorched, fused, coagulated, and in one way or another irretrievably spoilt, on June 9th, 1873. The "soft" porcelain melted, only the "hard" Plymouth and Bristol ware could stand the heat, and even upon that the molten glass came falling, gluing calcined fragments of "soft" ware to it, making the red ruin worse. So perished irretrievably about a thousand of the finest and most irrecoverable pieces that early enthusiasm and pioneer knowledge could get together. The fire insurance companies might pay the insured amounts that were due, but nothing could repay the collector's losses, or make up for the waste and damage to the English china and pottery hunters' hobby for ever.

"Let us now praise famous men" is a good old college chant. Gratitude to the five men and a woman I have named demands that such a chapter as this should be written.

Gratitude is Due. There were other connoisseurs and chroniclers, such as Dr. Diamond, Mr. Hugh Owen, Mr. William Edkins, Mr. Llewellyn Jewett, Sir Charles Robinson, and Mr. Rudler, earlier, contemporary, or slightly subsequent, I know; but the "giants in those days" were those I have named first, and not a single collector who reads these pages will begrudge the praise I have given them here.

And let me add that a collector ought to know the history and biography of his subject, if he intends to understand it intellectually and to turn his hobby into a means of mental cultivation and studious joy. Here, therefore, is a piece of ceramic history that hitherto had never been written; though every collector has heard some of the names I have mentioned, few understand how much we owe to them. I am happy to pay this tribute particularly to my neighbour and my friend, Professor Church.

TRANSFER-PRINTED POTTERY, ENAMELS, AND CHINA.

Do you want to begin a collection, a collection not too small nor too large, too dear, or too common, as with an idea and a link consecutively binding it together? Then why not try "transfer-printed"? It is quite an interesting subject, on which one can safely descant to one's friends.

About the year 1749 John Sadler, an engraver, working in a house at the back of Lord Street, Liverpool, noticed his children pick up a proof that he had "pulled" and thrown down in disgust, apply the still-wet ink to a piece of crockery, and triumphantly show the picture transferred. It was an accidental revelation, but John Sadler pursued the suggestion, and seven years later he and Guy Green, a master-printer, made affidavit that, on the 27th of July, "they, these deponents, without the aid or assistance of any other person or persons, did, within the space of six hours, print upwards of 1,200 earthenware tiles, more in number and better and neater than one hundred skilful pot painters could have painted in the common and usual way of painting with a pencil."

**Liverpool
Printed.**

A good many of these Liverpool tiles remain. They are five inches square, they are printed in black, red, or puce, with sometimes a little green or other colour added by hand. A fine series of them may be seen in the little room given up to English ceramics at the British Museum. One of them, signed *J. Sadler*, sold at Sotheby's four years ago for £1 4s. 0d.; and others, unsigned, fetched from 10s. to a guinea each. *Sadler, Liverpool—Green, Liverpool*—and *J. Sadler, Liverpool*, are other marks. And these are not found on tiles only.

For Liverpool produced several kinds of printed ware, in pottery and in porcelain. Very rare are the "framed" tiles—tile and frame all in one, the earthenware moulding being black, to represent the black pearwood frames of the period, though I possess a pair which cost me only 2s.; there are three holes in the top of the frame, for threading and hanging. But Liverpool style tea-services, cider-mugs, jugs, and platters, edged with a thin black line and usually decorated with views of mansions in black, are to be had for a few shillings each piece. The point is that the decoration must be *printed*, not painted.

I have put the "Liverpool printed" first, because, though the question is disputable, I think that there can be little doubt that transfer-printing on earthenware took place at Liverpool first, in or about the year 1749. But in 1753, if not earlier, people were transfer-

**Battersea
Printed.**

printing on enamel at Battersea, where at York House enamel-making began in 1750. Battersea enamels are as rare and costly now as they are dainty, but I once acquired a wine label, most delicately printed in pink on white, for seven shillings. Some of the flat-topped Battersea boxes *may* have been printed from negative copper-plates direct, but for all curved surfaces the paper

transfer, the "gores" of it cut away so as to fit and round upon the curves and hollows of the box, must have been used, the wet ink of the picture being left on the surface of the enamel.

In that way, too, they began to print porcelain at Worcester, at least as early as 1757; Hancock, the engraver, went from Battersea to Worcester to show the Worcester potters how to do it. Nothing more exquisitely dainty than real early Worcester transfer-printed can be imagined. But it is much forged. Nobody who has gained the collector's intuitive sense for the real is likely to be taken in by the imitations, however. The paste of the imitations is hard, as I have already explained, when it ought to

**Worcester
Printed.**



**Death of General Wolfe, Staffordshire, 1780.
Cream Ware Wedgwood.**

be soft; it is not opaque enough, and light coming through it looks yellow, when it ought to look green. Above all, the engraving from which it was printed was done in scrappy lines, though the real thing was done in lines as fine and clear and continuous as George Hancock, a prince among engravers, could cut them. Real Worcester transfer-printed is seldom marked.

Later than this, George Brett began to make enamel boxes at Bilston. Bilston enamels are inferior in quality to the poorest productions of Battersea, and at Bilston but

Bilston Printed. little transfer-printing took place. The boxes are usually yellow, blue, or pink, with a white top, on which "A token of Regard," or some such motto, is printed sometimes.

The straw or cream or saffron-coloured table-ware made by Wedgwood in and from the year 1762, called cream ware or Queen's ware, was frequently printed, in black or red, by Sadler and Green at Liverpool. Sometimes the outlines of the decoration were printed, and then touched up with colours by hand.

**Printed
Queen's Ware.**

I possess a large jug, which cost me half a guinea, that is practically covered with two transfer-printed pictures in violet on yellow glaze. Some pieces of Queen's ware must form part of any collection of "printed." Queen's ware, invented and named by



Reverse of General Wolfe Jug.

Wedgwood, was produced by Turner, Adams, Palmer, Neale and Wilson, Mayer and other Staffordshire potters, and also at Leeds; for some capital transfer-printing, though not of the most excellent, was done at Leeds—red, purple, and black—and is well worth searching for.

In 1780 Minton engraved for Turner, of Caughley, the first willow-pattern design, and specimens are usually marked with a blue crescent or a C or an S, or with a cross or with cross-swords, under the glaze, both on china and earthenware. From 1800 onward the pattern, always printed, became in common Staffordshire use. Willow pattern was printed in dark and light blue, in black, violet, and in brown, at Swansea, Leeds, or Etruria. The pattern was applied to tea-sets, leaf-dishes, soup ladles, and pickle dishes, as well as to the larger table-ware.

**Willow Pattern
Printed.**

A collection of "printed" would be swollen indeed if it contained a sample of each kind, maker, and date associated with transfer-printing done in the Potteries. Beginning to be done there about 1790, perhaps, printing on ware has kept up ever since. Old Staffordshire printed ware is the commonplace and stand-by of the brokers' shops. You find it in deep blue, light blue, pink, green, purple, mauve, and brown. You find it in "views," figure-pictures, flower-patterns, seascapes, pictures of English and American buildings, mock Oriental designs, and armorial shields and flourishes. You find it used to outline floral decorations, which were then coloured by hand. Such printed and painted porcelain is of small value, as a rule; it is Staffordshire printed *earthenware* which interests in a collection.

**Staffordshire
Printed.**

"Swansea" was printed in black, and in outline for coloured flowers. "Chamberlain Worcester" was often printed, not in outline so much as in stipple. "Coalport" was

Miscellanea.

sometimes printed, even in the earlier days. And a keen-eyed collector will come across many pieces of printed ware difficult to classify, which show how widely diffused became the mechanical art which John Sadler discovered by accident. Printed jugs are among the most interesting features of such a collection as the one I have been outlining. Sunderland and Staffordshire jugs were often inscribed with mottoes and verses. Perhaps the most characteristically English verse ever used in that way is the following:—

A little health, A little wealth,
A little House and Freedom;
And at the end A little friend,
And little cause to need him.

That is, of course, from an early piece of printed ware.

LESSONS FROM A LEAF-SHAPED DISH.

The dealer in this case was an elderly woman. She went to a sale at Christie's, and saw a leaf-shaped dish put up to auction. Other dealers fought shy of it, though it was large, elaborate, perfect, and desirable in itself. "Only early Continental," they called it.

The woman thought it was "Chelsea" or "Bow," and bid 10s. for it. The other dealers "let her have it," as they said,

with grins at her simplicity. She took it
Is it "Chelsea"? to her shop and showed it to customers who were accustomed to buy "Chelsea" and

"Bow." One and all, these customers also fought shy of the dish. It was too heavy for "Chelsea," they said, the chocolate edge suggested "Bow," but the painting was too foreign-like, the paste was not "soft" enough, the glaze was not glassy enough, and so forth. She was asking ten pounds for it. "Ridiculous!" said the customers, "wouldn't have it at any price." The woman lost faith in the dish, and sold it as being "doubtful," for a pound.

She sold it to me. "Chelsea, certainly!" I called it. I bought it in the daylight, and in the daylight I showed it to a friend of mine, who is a super-excellent judge of porcelain. He said it was *not* Chelsea; he thought it might be "early German"; the painting rather suggested "Strasbourg." I began to loose faith in it myself.

Then I tried a fresh test. I switched on the electric light and held the dish up close to it, between the radiant bulb and the eye. "Look! it *is* Chelsea!" I said, with pride. For there were the Chelsea "moons."



The Earliest Chelsea Mark.

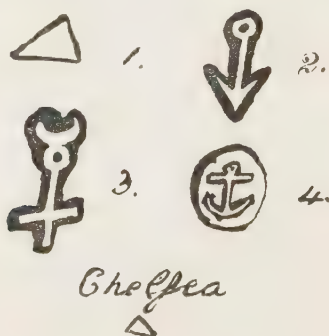
Now, what are Chelsea moons? They are a feature of the china made at Chelsea during the earlier period of the manufacture there, a period which extended from the beginning until the year 1757. The late Dr. Diamond, a great connoisseur in his day, was the first to notice that in Chelsea china of that period a number of small, moon-like discs or spots, irregularly placed, show more translucent than the rest of the material when held up to artificial light. The paste of which the china was made contained a good deal of glass; this glass was not perfectly mixed up with the other materials of the paste, and in places got clotted together. Result, the Chelsea "moons." Effect, in the case of this leaf-shaped dish, to guarantee the piece, which dealers and amateurs alike had rejected, as being true Chelsea after all.

It must not be supposed, however, that all Chelsea china shows "moons," or that pieces which otherwise bear the characteristics of

Chelsea ware are, if moonless, not Chelsea at all. But a good deal of "Chelsea" shows the moons, for a good deal of "Chelsea" was manufactured during the earlier period. A single year's productions during that period occupied a sixteen-days' auction sale. The auction catalogue in the year 1756 contained more than 1,600 lots, and more than 6,500 pieces. It is supposed that "Chelsea" began to be made as early as 1740. The goat-and-bee jug, shown on page 43, is by no means a 'prentice piece, and it is dated 1745, as you see in the drawing of the base. Between 1745 (to put the beginning at the latest) and 1757, a great number of "moony" pieces must have been made, and my leaf-shaped dish is certainly one of them.

Mr. J. F. Blacker, in his fine book in this series, gives the following information about early "Chelsea": "The paste is white, inclined to cream-colour; a drop of separated or skimmed milk dropped upon it gives an exactly similar colour. In the paste are a number of dark flecks or little spots, unequally distributed, which are evident to the touch when the fingers are passed over it. With a file I very easily cut the paste, but not with

**Other Tests for
Early Chelsea
Ware.**



Chelsea—Early Marks.

the point of a penknife, and, when I rub a fingernail against it, it will not leave a mark on the nail. To the tips of the fingers the base, which has been ground, is smooth and soft. So the paste is 'soft,' but not so 'soft' as some English porcelain. The body is thick and comparatively heavy, and it is chipped with ease. The chips fly off in flakes, which shows the imperfections of the materials used, the dark flecks being very numerous. Upon the base are three 'spur-marks,' showing the points on which it was supported in the kiln. When the glaze is examined it is found to be soft and easily scratched with a file. It resembles thin milky glass, showing numerous abrasions where it has been rubbed against some harder substance. Black or dark specks of paste penetrate through some of the glaze, which shows in addition several tiny pits or holes, as if it had sunk into irregular depressions of the paste produced in firing. In some cases the painting is used

to hide some defect in the paste, such as blisters, or even lumps, on the plates and dishes."

Now that is the way to understand and know old porcelain.



The Anchor Marks.

To the accustomed eye, and the instinct which comes to the experienced collector, a true piece, though unmarked with the maker's mark or the trade-mark, is "marked all over." And not till one can by such indices as those recognise an unmarked piece of china

"Marked
all over."

as unerringly as though, being genuine, it bore the mark, does one become a judge of old china. But the marks are valuable indices, and should be known by the searcher for "Chelsea."

The goat-and-bee jug shows the earliest-known mark, perhaps—at any rate, the earliest dated mark. The smaller of the two sets

**Chelsea
Marks.**

of marks herewith (page 44) shows the earlier Bow and Chelsea marks; the larger shows the later anchor marks, which have been found, so far, on Bow and Chelsea china, together with three Chelsea-Derby marks (the D and anchor and the anchor and crown), and one or two others supposed to indicate "Bow."

In the fourth line of the larger diagram you will note, inserted for comparison, the anchor mark used at Sceaux and the anchor mark used at Venice. The china works at Sceaux were not established till 1750, at least five years after the Chelsea works, and though porcelain may have been made at Venice as early as 1720, the anchor mark was not used there till about 1765. Neither at Sceaux nor Venice was the anchor mark so neatly painted, or painted so small, as at Chelsea and Bow. The double anchors side by side, one upside down, is a Chelsea mark. The anchor and sword, or anchor and dagger, is usually a Bow mark. The B and anchor is a Bow mark. But in distinguishing between "Chelsea" and "Bow," the other characteristics of the china are much more helpful than the marks.

UNCOMMON HINTS ABOUT "OLD WORCESTER.'

For a long time past "Old Worcester" has been the costliest English porcelain in the market, and if one confines one's search to marked pieces, or the more usual kinds of pieces, the search may be fruitless for a collector with only a little money to spend. But listen: "Salt spoon, blue painted; large knife and fork, blue painted; small knife and fork, blue painted;" how few collectors would expect these to be "old Worcester"? Yet old Worcester they are. They are thus described in the "Catalogue of a Collection of Worcester Porcelain in the Museum at the Royal Porcelain Works," 1888. And again: "Toy teapot, blue painted, Chinese flowers; hand candlestick, embossed, blue painted flowers; cornucopia, embossed, blue painted; strainer (7½ ins.), blue print; egg drainer (3½ ins.), painted blue lily." Most of these bear no mark, but they are all old Worcester, and other examples of them are lying about, unrecognised because markless, and also because they are unusual forms, not those which dealers and collectors are accustomed to see.

Then, again, there is the field which lack of knowledge or neglect leaves open. I called at a house one day the other year, and in the drawing-room I saw, on the floor, under the bottom shelf of a whatnot, a fine piece of old blue-and-white Worcester, choke-full of visitors' cards. It was a

large lidless soup tureen, blue painted and embossed, and unmarked. I ventured to inquire about the lid, and the lid was found for my inspection. The whole thing was perfect, except for a slight defect in the pine-apple knob of the lid. Then I noticed, in the same room, another unmarked piece of old Worcester, that was in use as a watering-pot for the plants which stood in jardinières in the room. It was the fellow to the piece described in the Worcester Museum Catalogue as "Teapot, blue painted, Chinese landscape, blue balls."

Few collectors ever think of hunting for old Worcester saltspoons, knife and fork handles, toy teaware, bedroom candlesticks, kitchen strainers, and breakfast table drainers that are lying about unmarked. No marks are so well known in the trade, even to the minor dealers and small brokers, as are the Worcester crescent and the Worcester fretted square—the square mark, as they call it—and anything with a Caughley capital C on it, even, will be vouched as "Worcester" to you in such shops. What baffles the dealers, however, is a piece that is totally unmarked; and it is just there where the connoisseur's recognition of a ware by its other features can come in. The things which can be done in that way still, and with many wares, seem marvellous. The other day a fine and all-but-perfect "Leeds" flowerpot, large, shapely, and pale green all over, almost, with the characteristic yellowish-green Leeds glaze, stood on an outside stall within hail of a rich residential region of London, marked "fourpence," amidst a miscellaneous lot of ugly modern crocks.

How many collectors know that Worcester produced a "small jar, black print engraving of birds"? Or a "spoon-tray, branch handles, black print, engraving of subject called L'Amour"? These are not the kinds of Worcester transfer one is accustomed to see; but it is precisely the uncusomary kinds that one may most hopefully hunt for, armed with shillings. Talking of shillings, I am reminded that tokens for a shilling and tokens for a florin were made at the old Worcester factory. They were transfer-printed with "I promise to pay," &c., "W. Davis, at the China Works," on one side, and embossed with "W.P.L." on the other. Hundreds, if not thousands of them, must have been turned out and circulated; they were currency between masters and men. Probably they were called in, redeemed, and then destroyed, most of them; but some are known to remain, being kept in museums and collections. And if some, why not others? Collectors should keep the weather eye open for yellowish-white discs, exactly the size of a penny or of a halfpenny, respectively, poorly printed in worn script on one side, and bearing W.P.L. in raised capital letters on the other.

A book which Mr. R. W. Binns, F.S.A., published in 1877 contains the following passage: "In the possession of Mrs. George

White Worcester. Barr is a cistern or elongated punch-bowl of elegant form, and with an embossed pattern evidently copied from a silver model. *The bowl is white.*" Few of us, I suppose, have thought of looking for *white* Worcester, yet I daresay a good deal of it still exists,

catalogued in collections as "Oriental," probably, for the earliest Worcester china might pass for Chinese with anybody who did not test its hardness.

Mr. Binns quite fairly claimed that "no collector has ever seen a piece of old Worcester *crazed*." The earliest Worcester cups and

saucers are plain and very small. On some

Some Miscellaneous

Hints.

old Worcester the fish-scale pattern was embossed, not painted. The blue transfer-printing on Worcester tea-sets, particularly that pattern

which includes a butterfly, was much counterfeited in "Salopian" and "Coalport." The most valuable of "Worcester" belongs to the Doctor Wall period; but any Worcester porcelain made before the year 1852 is worth acquiring.

Here are the typical Worcester marks down to 1837 (*see* page 10). The larger set represents the "Doctor Wall" and the "Flight and

The Marks

Here Given, and a

Final Hint.

Barr" period; the smaller set represents the period between the latter and the year 1852. The

"a" and "b" in the larger set represent Worcester copies of the Dresden and Sèvres marks.





Sevres Vase.

Page 31



Wedgwood Coffee Can and Saucer.
Tricolour Jasper Ware.

Page 68.)



Coalport Porcelain.

(Page 49.)



Staffordshire Figures.
(Page 55.)

OLD COALPORT PORCELAIN.

The current prices for fine Chelsea, Bow, Derby, Worcester, Lowestoft, Bristol, and Plymouth old china are so high that a collector of modest means may wisely ask himself if there be no other ware, less costly at present, which will repay the collecting. One answer to that query is "Coalport." Yes, collect "old Coalport"; but be sure that you get it. For modern "Coalport" is marked with a very misleading mark indeed.

With no intention to mislead, of course, the proprietors of the great and successful works still flourishing at Coalport have adopted the mark of a royal crown under the word "England," and over the word "Coalport." Below this comes the date "1750," and below that come the words "Leadless Glaze." It is not everybody who knows that "leadless glaze" is quite a latter-day humanitarian invention, to avoid the awful ills which lead-poisoning may bring upon the potter. Some collectors are misled by the date "1750," and take a modern piece of Coalport to be a hundred and fifty-eight years old. In point of fact, the Coalport works were founded in 1780, not in 1750; but as their founder,



Caughley and Coalport Marks.

John Rose, afterwards bought up the Caughley works, at which he had been an apprentice, and the Caughley works *were* founded about 1750, that date has been incorporated in the modern Coalport trade mark. Half-ignorant dealers often represent this dated mark as authenticating a piece as "old," and do it in good faith, not knowing any better. In 1875 the modern mark was "Coalport, 1750." In 1881 the crown was placed above that. In 1895 "England" was placed above the crown. And in 1901 "Leadless Glaze" was added, underneath all. These modern marks are in dark green.

Here, however, are the real "old" marks used at Coalport,

which was also known as Coalbrook Dale and Colebrook Dale.

The Old Marks. Sometimes there is, also, in underglaze blue, "C. Port." Another inscription, printed, is "John Rose and Co., Colebrook Dale, 1850."

Some old Coalport ware was marked "A. B. and R. P. Daniell, 120 New Bond Street and 18 Wigmore Street." In 1820 Mr. Rose received the gold medal of the Society of Arts, and there is a mark of that date, "Coalport Improved Feltspar Porcelain" inside a laurel wreath, and, outside, "Patronized by the Society of Arts. The gold medal awarded May 30, 1820." Further, there are the marks "J. Rose and Co.," and "J. R. S. F." In early pieces the Caughley marks "S" and "Salopian" were continued. The rose mark refers to the proprietor's name, of course, and the S, N, and C. in the curious amperzand-like mark stand for "Coalport," "Salopian," and "Nantgarw" respectively, the Salopian and Nantgarw rights and connection having been purchased by Mr. Rose; the Nantgarw purchase took place in 1822, which helps to date Coalport pieces marked with the "amperzand."

John Rose was not much hampered by scruples in business. He copied the wares of other factories and their marks as well.

The Dresden Cross-swords and the double
The Mock Marks. "L" of Sèvres may be found on old Coalport ware. There can be no doubt that Sèvres ware was imitated better at Coalport than ever it was elsewhere. I saw the other day a fine jardinière in soft china, turquoise blue, raised and matted gilding, and fine picture-painting, which but for the "C B D" monogram at its base must have passed muster anywhere as old Sèvres. But the Coalport mock marks, when they exist, are *over* the glaze; the original marks of Dresden and Sèvres are *under* the glaze, take note.

The Coalport works still turn out much splendid china, uniform in quality; old Coalport varied very much. The earliest Coalport paste was the same as

The Old Qualities. the Salopian paste, which much resembled the Doctor Wall period Worcester paste. Then came the Coalport paste, made after the suggestions of William Billingsley, who worked at Coalport, a softer, whiter, more glassy and translucent product; then, after, 1822, another "body," with bone-ash in it, at first grey and a little dull and then very hard, "tight," and brilliant. This is practically the paste which is in use at Coalport to-day. The rich "rose du Barri" colour was an old speciality of Coalport; so also was a fine apple-green, and the Sèvres turquoise. Coalport continued the Caughley "willow-pattern" china, and the Coalport blue or Broseley dragon pattern was a famous ware. Vases decorated in Japanese style were made, and also a fine shell porcelain, very scarce.

Three vases, eight or nine inches high, have realised £4 15s.; a pair of tureens have brought fifteen guineas. A dessert service has been bought for ten guineas, and ten

Some Prices. guineas have been paid for a small Coalport vase. A fine Coalport plate (unmarked), with exquisite fruit decoration, has fetched only 10s. A tea service has been sold for £7. It is plain, therefore, that bits of "old Coalport" are still within the capacity of moderate purses, and it will not be

unwise to secure any such pieces which, at moderate figures, may come within reach; marked pieces are, of course, particularly desirable acquisitions.

Unmarked pieces may be known by a peculiar dead whiteness, a scratchiness of the glaze, a high degree of smoothness where the glaze is not scratched, and the floral decoration. When William Billingsley went to Coalport (he died there, by the by, at "a little house on the Shifnal road") he taught the china-painters his way of painting flowers, but they hardly caught it correctly. You will find much old Coalport ware that is "painted with Billingsley's flowers"; the knots of flowers, the sprayed-out leaves, and the pink rose; but the Coalport rose is not quite the "Billingsley rose." The Coalport rose is a little too much rounded up on the swell of it, the "high light" there being large and full; it is a bulbous rose, too bulbous, a bit peony-like; it is too tight and compact. But it is a capital guide to the Coalport ware when you know the rose and can identify it. This method of identification is one of those which you will not find referred to in "china" books; special experience and observation find you out a method like this for nearly every kind of old porcelain, and give hints which are invaluable to those who can take and appreciate them. Only when you are master of many tests such as that can you claim to be an expert in old china.

BILLINGSLEY CHINA.

Here is an idea for a collection: collect china that William Billingsley painted, or made and painted, or made only, or caused others to make and paint. It would include Duesbury porcelain made at Derby, Pinxton porcelain, porcelain decorated at Mansfield, porcelain decorated at Torksey, "Barr, Flight and Barr," and also "Chamberlain" ware made at Worcester, Nantgarw porcelain, Swansea ware, old "Coalport," and "Spode." William Billingsley made at Nantgarw the finest soft porcelain ever made anywhere, and he was the most accomplished painter of "flowers from the life" on porcelain that England, or Europe, indeed, ever produced. Seven "Nantgarw" plates of his painting have been sold for £97, and one of these "poems in porcelain" has fetched as much as twenty-six guineas. But bits of Billingsley porcelain can be had much cheaper than that.

I possess the top of a pomade pot that was painted by Billingsley; it cost me sixpence. For 6s. 6d. I have bought a "Billingsley" style late Coalport vase twenty inches high. The Billingsley style is unmistakable, once you have studied it. Study it at Cardiff Museum and at South Kensington, and you will come to recognise the style on at least one piece of porcelain in almost every dealer's window. For at Derby, Worcester, Swansea, and Coalport his style formed a "school." On many pages of the old pattern-books that used to be kept in the old Derby china works are written the words "To be painted with Billingsley's flowers." When I suggest a collection of "Billingsley" porcelain, therefore, I mean a collection of porcelain made or painted

**The Billingsley
Style.**

by him, or painted by somebody else in the "Billingsley" style. Some of his imitators caught the style almost perfectly; I have seen Barr, Flight and Barr tea-things, and even Spode cups and saucers, that bloom with almost a perfect replica of the famous "Billingsley" rose. In 1796, when Mr. Duesbury's London agent heard that Billingsley was going to leave the china works at Derby, he wrote to the proprietor, urgently recommending him to "make a bargain with Mr. Billingsley for him to continue with you, for it will be a great loss to lose such a hand, and not only that, but his going into another factory will put them in the way of doing flowers in the same way, which at present they are entirely ignorant of." Exactly. When Billingsley left Derby and began his fugitive travels, he began to "put them in the way of doing flowers in the same way" at Worcester, Swansea, Coalport, and elsewhere.

Now what was that "same way"? I can best explain it by analogy. The earliest English painters in water-colours used to

**The Billingsley
Way.**

leave the white of the paper untinted, to stand for the high lights, but Girtin and Nicholson, and others who came later, used to "wipe out" the lights with a little water and a tiny sponge. When you "wipe out," as artists call it, you do not wipe *quite* all the colour away, and a lovely faint tinge, not quite white, but darkening at its edges into the local colour, or the shadow, remains. Just so was William Billingsley the first china-painter to "wipe out" the lights. If you look at flowers painted before he began, in 1775, at Derby—flowers painted by Frenchmen, at Chelsea or Bow, for instance—you will see that the flowers were painted round the white glaze left blank where the lights on the flowers were intended. But, on the contrary, the surfaces of "Billingsley" flowers were painted all over first of all, and then (as Mr. Ward, of the Cardiff Art Gallery, writes in an excellent monograph on Billingsley and Pardoe, price threepence) "the lights were swept out with a half-charged brush, thereby producing a more delicate gradation of light and shade." That was the Billingsley way, and it became popular; I possess a Staffordshire earthenware plate, even, that is decorated with "Billingsley" flowers.

So much to explain his style of painting; but he was a *maker* of porcelain as well. He gave up his post as painter at Derby

**The Billingsley
Porcelains.**

to go elsewhere and make china as well as paint it. All the rest of his life he was a wanderer, a kind of pilgrim towards the perfect porcelain. He first made china at Pinxton. Pinxton porcelain is heavy, thick, and glossy, often decorated with the forget-me-not sprig in green and blue and gold, and often (on the more important pieces) with little landscapes, not so well painted as those on old "Derby," but in the same style. The china Billingsley made at Nantgarw is lighter, thinner, and whiter than the Pinxton ware. The paste and glaze of "Nantgarw" have been compared with falling snow, a clarified silvery fluid just crystallised. The mark is NANT-GARW, with CW underneath it. The porcelain Billingsley made at Swansea is a little stronger than the Nantgarw ware, but both are exquisitely translucent. A good test of translucency in china is to hold it up, reversed, against a moderate light; if the form and outline as well as the shadow of the fingers you

press against the back of the piece of china show through to the front, and, above all, if you can see the colours of the painting through from the front to the back when you hold the china up reversed, then, if other indications correspond, you are holding a piece of Nantgarw or Swansea china. But I must add that early Coalport and "Chamberlain Regent Worcester" are just as translucent, or almost so, and early "Coalport" was often painted in the Billingsley style.

A very good collection of Nantgarw and Swansea porcelain is always on view in the Cardiff Art Gallery. It suffers, perhaps (as

**Where to see
Specimens Best.**

nearly every collection of china suffers), from the point of view of the beginning collector, by presenting only fine examples, and not guiding one very much towards those more ordinary specimens which are still open to be collected. But in that Gallery you will see a moss-rose painted by Billingsley, and a landscape done by him at Mansfield, a little in the "Pinxton" style. What Billingsley did at Derby can be seen in the Derby Art Gallery. What the Billingsley flower-style was when copied you will see in almost any set of Bloor Derby, or Barr, Flight and Barr, or Spode tea-things painted with flowers—I mean cups and saucers with blue-and-gold panels, and bunches of flowers in the white "reserves," and often roses at the bottom of the cups, inside them.

Billingsley best loved the rose and the wild rose, but he also loved the tulip; and the auricula, too, he would often paint. He had a fondness for one white rose, or at any rate one flower of a dove-colour grey, in each nosegay. His bouquets throw out loose, slight sprays, and the leaves are darkish, little-veined, and vaguely washed-in. It is, however, impossible to convey in words a just idea of what his style of flower-painting really was; the thing to do is to see specimens, and the style is so marked and attractive that you cannot miss recognising it again after that. What are called "Spode clusters" on ewers and basins are really imitations of Billingsley flowers.

ROCKINGHAM AND STAFFORDSHIRE FIGURES AND COTTAGES.

When the ordinary uninstructed dealer or small broker gets possession of a rather clumsy small china figure or group, or a porcelain money-box or pastille-burner or night-light shade made in the shape of a cottage, he calls it Rockingham; the sins of Staffordshire in that way, *circa* 1830, are visited upon the head of the little manufactory which existed at Swinton, in Yorkshire, from 1745 onward, and produced china wares from 1823 till 1842.

I do not say that china figures, groups, and cottages were not made at Rockingham; they were. But when they were, they were finely modelled, in a bone-ash paste that was nearly perfect in its technique. It is true that the Rockingham porcelain glaze sometimes crazed, cracking into spidery fine lines in the oven, and that there are certain Rockingham pieces which bear the heraldic

griffin mark, and yet are grey in colour and warped in shape. But, generally speaking, Rockingham porcelain cottages, figures, and groups were works of art, done in extra-fine porcelain; while the figures, groups, and cottages which the smaller dealers and brokers try to sell you as "Rockingham" are neither works of art nor good in material; the only elements of value of any kind about them are that they are "old" and "quaint."

Oldness and quaintness are charms in themselves, and an old Staffordshire *porcelain* group, figure, or cottage—porcelain, mind you, not earthenware—no matter how small, if going at four or five shillings, is worth acquiring by a collector. But, I pray you, do not call them Rockingham, as uninstructed or cunning dealers do. True Rockingham ranks with some of the most famous old English porcelain; though, as it did not begin to be made till long after Josiah Spode had killed "soft" porcelain with his felspar, Rockingham porcelain must be counted as "hard."

The Rockingham cottages were made in a day while still it was *bon ton* to burn Oriental spices in drawing-rooms and boudoirs; the

**True Rockingham
Cottages.**

little china houses were meant to be used as pastille-burners, and for that reason were usually made in two parts, the roof being removable. In the case of some—the larger—cottages, they were all in one piece, the fumes from the pastille rising into the room through the chimneys; and when the "cottages" were not cottages but "castles," the pastille sent up its perfume through the towers and turrets. The "castles" were usually very severe and inaccurate erections, in what I may call the "Strawberry Hill" style of Gothic. On the other hand, the Rockingham cottages were very pretty little edifices indeed, with Bow-like flowers stuck about them, and with fuzzy wreaths and garlands of leaves and flowerets, so minute as to be hardly characterised and differentiated, ramping over the roof and outlining the eaves and gables. The bits of garden round the bases of the cottages were rendered by washes of colour, apparently "grained" afterwards, as decorators "grain" the paint on doors; the washes of colour were green and rich brown. Perhaps the best of the Rockingham cottages are those in white touched with gold; the gold was put on in a characteristic spriggy style. Rockingham ware was seldom marked, by the by.

Such were the Rockingham productions, which about the year 1830 various Staffordshire potters set themselves to imitate, either

**The Staffordshire
Cottages.**

I do not know that any earthenware cottages were ever turned out at the Rockingham pottery, and that in itself would settle whether an earthenware cottage can be Rockingham or not. But when the Staffordshire imitation was done in porcelain, it was done in a coarser, greyer, and heavier porcelain than Rockingham porcelain ever could be. Staffordshire cottages, being sold to people who did not use pastilles, were not made in two pieces, were intended for more prosaic purposes, and if they sometimes were used for night-light shelters, they more often were used as receptacles for coppers—savings banks. The old Staffordshire savings-bank cottages, with the slit in the base or in the roof, have been forged a good deal lately, and not one in six of those you see for sale is more than six years old.

I allow that in the later years of porcelain-making at Swinton some very heavy and dull figures were turned out, the characteristic "grained" green and brown being the decoration of their bases; but, as a rule, Rockingham figures were quite well modelled, and some of them suggest the highly artistic work of the kind that Spengler did at Derby. They usually had a curved base, like Dresden figures. Small white poodles were made at Rockingham, a line of gold running along the base of the plinth on which they stood, and these are often mistaken for "Derby"; in some cases the poodles are in a sitting-up and begging posture, upon circular bases which bear the gold line. There were also rams, their wool being wonderfully rendered in the kind of fuzzy stuff which was used as wreaths for the cottage. Not so very many fine figures were ever turned out at Rockingham at all, and practically none come into the market cheaply.

Those which the dealers offer you cheaply as Rockingham are Staffordshire imitations; and what I have said about the other imitations above stands good for these as well. **The Rockingham Figures.** A Staffordshire china figure, which a dealer called Rockingham and sold for five shillings, stands before me as I write. It is crazed and creamily discoloured all over; it is the figure of a man playing a kind of clarionet; his coat and vest are white, touched with imitation Rockingham gilding; his breeches are yellow, and he wears the characteristic Rockingham white hose and black shoes. A "spotted dog"—that favourite animal among Staffordshire potteries—sits beside him, and there is as much modelling and expression in the face of the dog as in the face of the man, which is, practically, none at all. Three little bits of green fuzzy stuff adorn the base, which has no gilt line around it. The piece is perfect, not a crack or chip in it; it is old, it is quaint, it is perhaps worth five shillings—but it is not "Rockingham."

I ought to say that Minton's turned out some excellent Staffordshire figures in white china in those days, however; and they are very rare. Minton's also produced some excellent white china cottages. Minton's cottages and figures may be known by a peculiar soft creaminess and a certain liberality in size. I must exempt Minton's work of these kinds from the general criticism of Staffordshire figures and cottages which I make above.

THE LOWESTOFT ENIGMA.

No English porcelain is so puzzling and speculative as "Lowestoft." Two blue-and-white plates of it were sold for £7 the other day; ten years hence they may quite probably sell for £27. For "Lowestoft" is an enigma, into which research has only just begun; not until 1902, a century after the Lowestoft works ceased to produce porcelain, did we get possession of the very rudiments of research into the matter. The old-china cult so increases in this country that, before long, "Lowestoft," because of its mystery and rarity, may quite well become to wealthy collectors the most attractive of all old chinas. If I owned much fine "Lowestoft" I

should certainly "hold on." But I am referring to the true Lowestoft ware, mind you, and to that alone.

In 1902 excavations were made at the malthouse and brewery which now surround the buildings once used for porcelain-making at Lowestoft. The moulds, fragments of china, and other indications then found go to show, and indeed to prove, that true "Lowestoft" was soft-paste china. The glaze of the glazed white fragments unearthed on the spot is seen to have a bluish tint, like that of liquid starch, and the surface to be perfectly smooth, not "chicken-skinned" nor "thumb-marked." The moulds unearthed showed embossed and fluted patterns; most of the painted bits discovered were blue-and-white, and only one of them showed anything like a "Lowestoft rose." You can see casts from them at the British Museum. Mr. W. Burton, F.C.S., artist-potter and author, writes that "the recently-discovered moulds show us that many of the pieces (that must have been made there) were in the same style as those made at Bow and Worcester, for we have (moulds for) dessert-dishes with basket patterns, jugs with overlapping leaf designs, and various ribbed and panelled pieces, such as were well known at Worcester, while (moulds for) pieces decorated with embossed patterns in low relief, such as we have noted in connection with the works at Bow, also occur." (I have inserted the words between brackets, in order to make the statements conveyed in that quotation more exact.) Then Mr. Burton goes on, speaking now not of the moulds but of the resultant porcelain: "These wares, and other of a simpler kind, which might have emanated from any Eighteenth-century factory, were decorated with simple painting in underglaze blue, or with decorations in enamel-colour of roses and ribbons; and in these latter a characteristic rose-colour appears, which is almost identical with that found on Chinese wares of the same period." It was this similarity in colour which led to Oriental china of certain kinds found in England after 1760 being called "Lowestoft." There was no Lowestoft factory mark.

Everybody knows the heraldic porcelain, the plates and dishes with coats-of-arms, the helmet milk-jugs, and so forth, which many dealers call "Lowestoft." And most collectors now know that this kind of ware is not "Lowestoft" at all. Pawnbrokers' shops are full of modern forgeries of plates and vases purporting to be "armorial Lowestoft"—a forgery of a misconception, that is, for the originals which the counterfeiters copy were Oriental and not English at all. These forgeries usually have a thin raised beading pattern in white enamel, like pearly vermicelli, wreathing the heraldic and floral parts of the decoration; but, although the moulds found at Lowestoft in 1902 *do* bear witness to embossed ware, none of them are so shaped as to be fitted to produce that raised thin kind of wreathing at all. The plates and dishes and helmet milk-jugs called "armorial Lowestoft" are usually thick, coarse, clumsy, ugly, pitted, warped, and uneven, the surface resembling "chicken-skin," and showing "thumb-marks," and being often "rippled like the sea-sands"; all that, however, is as foreign from the characteristics of the signed and dated Lowestoft soft

china ware existing in collections, as from the broken bits of porcelain dug up on the site of the old factory. Moreover, apart from the modern forgeries, there is in England and in the United States such an immense quantity of "armorial" that, as Mr. Solon points out, the little Lowestoft factory, which had only one kiln, could not possibly have turned out a hundredth part of it, and the kiln itself could not have provided heat enough to bake any but "soft" porcelain. Nevertheless, there must have been something which accounted for the tradition which has given to "armorial" porcelain, hard and made in China, the name of Lowestoft. What was that something?

"They imported the white Chinese porcelain and painted it up at Lowestoft," is the common explanation, but it will not hold water, as a rule. "Here and there we meet with bits of Chinese porcelain which have been imported *in the white* and decorated or gilt in England," says Professor Church. "A few of such pieces



Lowestoft Jug.

may have been painted at Lowestoft—such an admission is all we can safely make," he goes on. But that admission cannot explain the existence of the many table-sets bearing the arms of East Anglian titled families. Probably the explanation is that the proprietors of the Lowestoft China Works acted as agents and factors for the Dutch East India Company in England. At that date the Honourable East India Company alone among English firms had the right to trade with the Extreme Orient, and most of the armorial china in England was ordered and made and shipped from Canton through the H. E. I. C.; just as in France armorial china is now known by the name of *Compagnie des Indes*. East Anglian peers, baronets, knights, and other armigerous persons probably preferred to send their commissions to Canton through the local Lowestoft works, to the Dutch East India Company, and in that way the Oriental porcelain ordered and factored at Lowestoft would come to be known as "Lowestoft" itself.

But so far I have only discussed a part of the enigma; there exists much "hard" English-made ware decorated with the Lowestoft ribbon and roses in a peculiar tint of red, and with mandarins that no heathen Chinese ever painted—Occidental mandarins with English faces, and gaunt kimonoed women—"Long Elizas," as they are called in the trade. In the dealers' shops this variety of ware also is called "Lowestoft." But it is "hard"; though English, it is not "Plymouth" or "Bristol." What is it, then? Can it be "Lowestoft."

Mr. J. F. Blacker, in his book in this series on "Old English China," says that "although Lowestoft is harder than Bow or Chelsea, it is decidedly soft to the file." But this rose and ribbon and mandarin English china is often quite hard indeed. Two handleless teacups and two saucers of this puzzling ware stand on the table as I write; one cup is marked, the other is not; both show the colours and pattern which that admirable writer on ceramics, Mr. E. T. Sachs, calls the "Lowestoft ribbon pattern." He thus describes it: "The extremely decorative ribbon pattern, with the curves of the ribbon, which, bear in mind, is pink, filled in alternatively with the typical Lowestoft rose and two other flowers which I am not bold enough to name." These flowers, by the by, appear almost to grow out of the ribbon, which might almost pass for a continuous stalk. Mr. Sachs goes on: "The ribbon is not confined to Lowestoft productions any more than is the rose, but that particular shape of ribbon in that particular colour, in combination with the other flowers and decorations depicted, belonged only to Lowestoft." *Eh bien*, I hesitate very much to criticise any statement by such a true connoisseur as Mr. Sachs, but when I take up my marked cup which bears that particular decoration, I find by the mark that unmistakably it was enamelled at New Hall.

That is, I think, the explanation of the most puzzling part of the Lowestoft enigma: the English-made *hard* "Lowestoft" is really "New Hall." For New Hall, Plymouth, and Bristol alone in England saw the making of porcelain that was hard.

FRENCH POTTERY AND PORCELAIN.

The French are as keen after old French porcelain and pottery as the English are after English earthenware and china; but while there is little knowledge of the English wares and very little store of them in France, in England a good deal is known about the French wares, and a good deal of French ware is lying about here, waiting to be picked up. It is difficult to purchase French ware cheaply in France, but not hard to purchase it cheaply in England. For instance:—

A collector saw in a suburban dealer's window two leaf-shaped bon-bon dishes, about the size of the palm of one's hand. They were lying edgewise, with the front surface close against the pane. They were decorated in the Kakiyemon style, sprays or branches across the white, combining the pine-twigs, the bamboo, and the plum, in pale red, pale blue, and a yellow. "Know what they are?"

**The Hunting-horn
Mark.**

said the dealer. "Yes," said the collector, "they are 'Chantilly. They will have a hunting-horn mark in red at the back. How much?" The dealer had given five shillings for them, the collector bought them from him for a guinea, and some time after a French dealer bought them from the collector for five pounds. They were porcelain, made at Chantilly about the year 1730.

The same collector bought ten French earthenware plates for half a crown each, and an eleventh for three-and-sixpence from a miscellaneous furniture shop in Hammersmith. **"Widow Perrin" and "Hannong."** The eleventh plate he sold for £2. It was decorated with a beautifully-pencilled outline of men with a mule approaching a castle, slightly shaded and coloured; the edge of the plate was gilt, and sprigs of flowers adorned the rim. It had been made at the pottery of Veuve Perrin, at Marseilles, about the year 1760. The combined initials VP appear on this kind of ware, in black, pink, violet, or brown.

The ten other plates were the work of the Hannongs, at Strasbourg, about 1740-1770. The surface was decorated with roses and tulips, in remarkable purple-red and chrome-yellow colours, with bottle-green leaves. In Paris such plates sell for about twenty-five shillings each. The letter H and a number, usually in bluish-black, appear outside the glaze at the back. Three floral sprays, at regular intervals, decorate the rim.

Note that on Chantilly china, as well as on Marseilles and Strasbourg earthenware, the glaze is very white, smooth, and tinny, and the decoration rests on it, slightly sensible to the touch, as though encrusted. The rims of Marseilles and Strasbourg plates are hexagonal, with little dents or indentations between the six parts. Sometimes the rims are edged with chocolate colour.

I allow that you do not see Chantilly or Marseilles or Strasbourg ware in every dealer's window every day. But, all the same, chances

**The Best
Collections.**

to acquire it come to the collector with a sharp eye who knows what he is looking for. The best way to know it is to study it in the Cluny Museum, at Paris, or at the Museum at Versailles. The best collection of it in England is at the Bowes Museum, at Barnard Castle. I imagine that the plates bought at Hammersmith had been brought over by some French collector who made his home in England, and at his death they were sold with the other household effects by auction, nobody being present who knew their market value in France. The dealer would buy the eleven plates for five or six shillings. The collector who found them paid twenty-six shillings for them, sold one for forty shillings, got the rest for less than nothing, therefore, and has in them a property worth at least £10.

Most English people when they think of French porcelain think of "Sèvres," but let me say at once that only a very skilful

**Don't Trouble
about Sèvres.**

collector can go in for "Sèvres" at any price. It is the "soft" Sèvres which is really valuable, and there is so much faked stuff about that any "hard" Sèvres is a very risky purchase. Seven very worn "soft" Sèvres plates were offered for sale for eight guineas the other day. But if you *wish* to study Sèvres and collect it, the best places for studying it in England are the Wallace collection, at Hertford

House, Manchester Square, and the Bowes Museum, at Barnard Castle. Few people know what a splendid collection of French porcelain and pottery John Bowes left to the District Council of the little town of Barnard Castle, by the by; about 4,000 people there collectively own a museum and endowments worth £300,000.

A friend of mine bought a Rouen pilgrim bottle in a South of England town for ninepence; it is worth £20. Modern Rouen

ware is poured upon the market, but "old Rouen" is scarce and valuable. The best place to study it is at the Rouen Museum. The

characteristic decoration of Rouen ware (always earthenware) is scallops, "the *motifs* of which," Garnier says, "were borrowed for the most part from stuffs, laces, marquetry, iron-work, or from tail-pieces in the fine books of the period." The period was the end of the Seventeenth century and the beginning of the Eighteenth, so far as the designs are concerned; but the potteries flourished most from 1750 to 1780. "Old Rouen" can still be picked up in England fairly cheap sometimes, though it is scarce and dear in France.

OLD ENGLISH EARTHENWARE.

I know a dignitary of a northern University who collects old English earthenware extensively, hardly ever refuses to buy a piece which discriminating dealers take to him, and lines his house with the fine old ware, displayed upon open shelves. But he declines to spend even a shilling upon old English china. He says, and says with much reason, that old English earthenware was the most distinctively English of all our ceramic productions, and the best and most original earthenware ever produced; while old English china was, on the contrary, mainly imitative of Oriental and Dresden and French porcelain. He says also, and with much reason, that, shilling for shilling, you can buy better value in old earthenware than you can in old china, if you collect.

The English potters in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and early Nineteenth centuries showed amazing fertility in the design and variety of their wares. There was fitness also. The delft of the Dutch, and the faience of the French were never so suitable for use as the tableware made by Wedgwood and his rivals and successors in Staffordshire. In the first years of the Nineteenth century English-made plates and dishes overran all Europe. In spite of Napoleonic prohibitions, English pottery almost ruined the French potters by its entrance and competition. As I write I have before me a soup plate which I bought for a franc at Montreuil-sur-Mer a few years ago. It belongs to the variety of earthenware called by old Josiah Wedgwood "Queen's ware," when he made it for Queen Charlotte's dinner table in 1765. This particular soup plate is decorated in anything but French fashion. Two fine old English gentlemen, in the top hats which were worn even during sport at the period, are fishing down an English stream, top-booted. But when I turn the plate over I find it marked, "Choisy." The fact is, that the only way in which French potters of that day could sell their wares was to imitate and forge (so to speak) the wares from Staffordshire. English plates were "so practical," as the French

say. They so exactly fitted into each other that a pile of them could be carried under each arm, and their surfaces were so smooth that cleanliness and ease in eating, and readiness in washing them, were the result. So the French potters had to make imitations, and to imitate even the English decorations of the plates.

So endless were the varieties of old English earthenware that quite a series of chapters would be necessary to describe the principal sorts alone. I can merely indicate here the sorts most desirable to collect.

"Slip" was a creamy fluid made of clay diffused in water. It was used for decoration: (1) washed over the whole surface; (2) washed over the whole surface and then a design scratched through; (3) dotted or trailed on to the surface in designs, just as a confectioner runs liquid sugar on to wedding cakes; and (4) marbled or combed over the surface, resembling marbled paper inside a book binding. Wrotham slipware has a red body ornamented with white slip in heavy patches, which are usually stamped with designs of masks, fleurs-de-lys, rosettes, and crosses, surrounded by radiating borders on the rim. Toft slipware, light, buff, or red body, and white or yellow slip, is famous and hunted for.

A kind of delft was made at Lambeth and elsewhere in England; also at Loughor in Wales. Large dishes were the articles most frequently made; they are ornamented with designs referring to William and Mary, the Stuarts, Holland, and the politics of the time. Often the rim is marked with "blue dashes." Adam and Eve under a tree are William and Mary of Orange, and the tree bears *oranges*, not apples. I own three of this rare series, which cost me 7s., 7s. 6d., and 12s. 6d. respectively; they would be worth six times that money at a good auction sale.

Early in the Eighteenth century, Shaw, Pennington, Barnes, &c., made and ornamented delft at Liverpool, wall-tiles, representing actors and actresses, *Æsop's fables*, &c. The ware has a bluish tinge, and is printed or painted in bluish-black, or rich blue, or purple. The Liverpool punch-bowls and druggists' jars are also much sought after.

The most famous of this stoneware is Dwight's, made at Fulham about 1670-1700. It can be known best by studying the fine examples in the British Museum. Similar stoneware, but brown, not grey, was made at Fulham, Bristol, Chesterfield, and Brampton. Nottingham brown stoneware (bear-jugs and pitchers) is famous.

Salt-glaze ware is, perhaps, the most sought after and valuable of all. It is a thin white stoneware, glazed by calcined salt. At the British Museum and South Kensington you may study it. Plates and dishes lavishly ornamented in low relief may still be bought for ten to twenty shillings. But the teapots and cream jugs, whether plain greyish-white, or in enamel colours, are rather costly.

**Slipware of the
Seventeenth
Century.**

**Adam-and-Eve
Dishes of the
Seventeenth
Century.**

**Liverpool Tiles
and Bowls.**

**Stoneware of the
Seventeenth
Century.**

Salt-Glaze.

One exceptional salt-glaze teapot was recently sold for £70. You may know true salt-glaze from later Staffordshire imitations by this: "Its glaze is unmistakable, being characterised by minute depressions which give it the appearance of a piece of fine leather or the skin of an orange," says Professor Church. "This glaze varies in 'grain' within wide limits even on the different parts of a single piece," and it has an "exquisite half-gloss."

Whieldon Ware. This is "fine hard ware of various colours, with applied ornaments in pipeclay, and a clear lead glaze." Often it is marbled, like agate; or "clouded," with dabs of purplish-brown, green, blue, and yellow, the colours then running in streaks.

Earthenware Statuettes and Toby Jugs. The chimney ornament figures made by the Woods, Whieldon, Walton, &c., in Staffordshire, a century or so ago, depend for their value on marks, or on artistic modelling. Later and coarser Staffordshire figures and groups are unworthy of a collector's attention, as a rule. "Toby jugs" are in great demand.

Leeds Ware. A yellowish, extremely light weight, delicate, incised, pierced, or relievo ware, sometimes transfer-printed in red or black, and sometimes painted, the jugs and teapots and cups with twisted handles; it is greatly sought after. (See the chapter on this.)

Wedgwood Ware. The cream or Queen's ware is highly prized, but the lavender-and-white, or pink, sage green, olive green, and yellow "jasper" productions and white reliefs, marked "Wedgwood" (see the chapters on these) and nothing more, are the specimens most in demand.

Willow Pattern. Plates and dishes of willow-pattern earthenware should be Minton, Salopian, Spode, Adams, Leeds, or Swansea to be valuable.



Slipware Posset Cup, 1690.

TOBY JUGS.

I went into a dealer's shop and found him unpacking two crates of Toby jugs, just imported from France and Holland *via* Hatton Garden. The crate from Holland contained blue-and-white delft Tobies, a variety which, in the real thing, hardly exists at all! But they would sell, the dealer told me. We were quite acquaintances, the dealer and I, and he was even good enough to show me the invoices for the crates of forgeries. A spurious "Toby," bought by the crateful, cost him about 1s. 10d., and his lowest price for one to a customer would be 5s. "And cheap at that," said he. "It gives 'em just the same pleasure as the real." He had the real thing in his shop, however; one example of it. It was a Rockingham "Toby," more of a coffee-pot than a jug, and his price was £2 for that.

About the best tests of age in any old lead-glazed ware are discoloration and iridescence. Lead-glaze on old "Derby" china, for instance, veins the surface with brown lines, due to discoloration. Lead-glaze on old pottery shows similarly brown on white ware, and on brown or dark-coloured surfaces it shows iridescent

**How to Know
the Real Thing.**



The Snuff Taker



The Brewer

—rainbow colours darkened by the under hues. This iridescence is particularly a feature in Whieldon ware and old "Rockingham" pottery. You must be careful not to mistake for the brown veining which I have just mentioned that "crazing," or cracking, of the glaze, which is due, not to the action of air and light, but to bad "firing." Nothing is easier for the forger to do than to "craze" his ware, and you will hardly examine a single brand-new "Toby" without finding it "crazed" somewhere or other. Ochre rubbed into these minute cracks gives the aged appearance very nearly. Iridescence is therefore the better test of the two.

Another useful hint is, to wet and rub some of the most highly-coloured parts of the surface. In some forgeries the haste and wholesale cheapness are such that the forgers do not even "fire" the jugs again after they have painted the most salient parts of them, and sometimes the colour will come off upon a moistened handkerchief.

And, further, in the shams the colouring is crude; it has no depth nor richness, it has not had time to sink in and show up through the glaze; and it is not *good* colour, but dirty, smudgily put on, and badly mixed to begin with. The great potters who first made Toby jugs—Whieldon, Enoch Wood, Voyez, and Walton—knew by long experience and consummate practical skill which colours and what combinations of colours would “stand the fire” and come out shining and comely.

Of course, in examining a “Toby” with a view to buying it, you will look for the abrasions, chippings, and other such marks of wear and tear, but those are just the apparent marks of genuineness which a forger can most readily produce. The forgers, when they wish to turn out a specially good “fake,” let beer simmer in their brand new jugs on the hob for days together, and often bury their brand-new jugs, wrapped up in raw hides, for weeks in garden soil. A file and a piece of emery paper, used skilfully, can produce abrasions which *look* like the effects of age and use, and a judicious tap with a hammer will produce a crack or a chip that does not injure the jug essentially, while it gives an apparent mark of old age.

The original Toby jug is said by tradition to have reproduced the form and features of

“Old Toby Philpot, as thirsty a soul

As e’er drank a bottle or fathomed a bowl,”

but it is quite as likely that a “Toby” is a modification of a “Bellarmine,” those stoneware Sixteenth and Seventeenth century

wine-flasks with the mask of a bearded man

Kinds of Tobies. under the rim of the neck; *Bartman* (bearded man) is their German name. Not till the

early Eighteenth century, however (to judge by costume), did the English Toby jug develop. The typical “Toby” represents a short, fat old fellow with a jug of ale on his knee; he usually wears a three-cornered hat. “The Old English Gentleman” variety has a refined face, though he holds a jug in one hand and a glass in the other. The “Snuff-taker” is very paunchy, and bends his head over his “mull.” He usually came from the Rockingham pottery. The “John Bull” in some cases holds one arm akimbo for a handle and the other uplifted for a spout; in others he is as represented on page 65. The “Simple Simon” looks the part, and squats somewhat, tailor-fashion. The “Sailor” is seated on a chest marked “Dollars”; the “Postboy” is astride a barrel. The “Hearty Good Fellow,” a smiling and gentlemanly Toby, holds jug and pipe, and his title is written at the base of the jug. There is a “Nelson” Toby, and a “Napoleon” Toby, a “Frederick the Great” Toby (sometimes named the “Prussian Hussar”), and a “Monk” Toby with hands clasped on the front of his gaberdine. The “Watchman” holds a lantern—“Lord Howe,” red-coated, sits upon a chest—the “Squire” occupies a three-cornered chair—the “Convict” wears the broad-arrow—the “Woman” is a female Toby in Rockingham brown ware—“Stingo” is a young man Toby—the “German” holds a big pipe and a money-bag. And there are many miniature Tobies, less than four inches tall. “Toby’s wife” is ten inches high, and represents a seated woman who wears a tall mob cap. Owners of Tobies may

find this list useful, in recognising and naming the variety they possess; but I fear the list is not quite complete. There is at least one blue-and-white Toby—delftish in appearance; he holds no jug, and he wears a flat beaver hat.

In 1903 a genuine Toby from Staffordshire, attired in a purple coat, green waistcoat, yellow knee-breeches, and white stockings, fetched £3 by auction. A marked Davenport

Tobies' Value. Toby has been sold for two guineas. The ordinary Staffordshire coloured Toby is worth about £2. The ordinary Rockingham Toby is worth about £1. The Staffordshire brown Tobies, imitating Rockingham, are worth 12s. A Whieldon Toby, in green and buff glaze, is worth £7. A "Voyez" Toby, highly modelled and coloured, would be worth ten guineas. The value of a Toby is considerably enhanced if he still possesses his hat. The hat in a lidded Toby is not only the lid but a cup-like vessel for drinking from. The idea was to pour the contents of Toby into Toby's hat, a drink at a time.



Nelson



John Bull

There are many "Toby" teapots, saltcellars, mustard pots, pepper casters, inkpots, and mugs, much counterfeited. Often

Other Tobies. Toby's head alone forms the mug. And there are biographical Tobies, which purport to be portraits of Nelson, Wellington, Howe, Duncan, Jervis, General Hill, the Duke of York, and so forth; these are often named on the base. Sometimes the name of the first owner of the jug is painted on it. Sometimes the jug is dated; but seldom do Tobies bear the maker's mark.

The same model and the same mould served to turn out Tobies who were each decorated in different ways, the colour of the coat

The Decoration of Toby. of one being used for the colour of the breeches of the other, and so forth. In fact, one of the charms of Toby collecting is the great

variety of Toby; though he is not so numerous that a complete collection of him cannot be got together without overweening cost. It should be added, however, that he gets rarer and costlier every day. He is a great favourite in the United States, and frequently emigrates about the month of October. On landing at New York he has to pay a duty of 40 to 50 per cent. of his cost in England. That makes him still dearer to his owner.

WEDGWOOD MARKS AND INDICES.

"Wedgwood" is the chief glory of English earthenware, and Josiah Wedgwood was perhaps the greatest figure in all the history of industrial art. He was as much a prince among potters as was Palissy or Della Robbia. So famous did he make Wedgwood earthenware that there is a tendency among collectors to suppose that any bit of "Wedgwood" is immensely valuable. But that is a mistake. In the auction room it is *old* Wedgwood that sells, and the fine pieces only which sell for large sums. Now, how may "Old Wedgwood" be known? For the great firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, Limited, is busily in existence to-day, and "Wedgwood's" has been a prominent feature of the Pottery District since 1760.

I rejoiced when I bought the other day an old Wedgwood portrait-plaque of Nelson for fifteen shillings. I touched it, it had the "firmness of grain," the "dense ivory-like surface, neither dry and chalky-looking on the one hand, nor of waxy smoothness on the other" which Professor Church describes. I knew that "some of the modern pieces of Wedgwood, and many of the productions of Josiah Wedgwood's contemporaries and immediate successors and imitators, can scarcely be distinguished from the old work," as Professor Church says, also. But I knew that there are "slight differences of tint, treatment, and finish" by which the old ware can be known.

So I looked at the plaque very carefully. The lavender-blue of the background was slightly paler than Wedgwood of the same colour made in the Nineteenth century, but not so pale with a greenish hue, or so dark with a purplish hue, as the ware which Turner, in 1780, or Adams, was imitatively making. The white of the portrait bust, raised in basso-relievo, is a warmer and more ivory-like white than the newer ware can show, reveals very slightly the background blue through it, and has the most exquisite smooth but not glazy surface, a little resembling the "smeared" variety of "Derby biscuit." I measured the oval plaque, it was 5½ in. by 4 in. Then I turned it over. Stamped deeply and clearly was the word WEDGWOOD in small capitals, and below that, at some distance the word NELSON. There was no second E in the mark, it did not read WEDGEWOOD, as certain colourable imitations do. There were no other letters, such as A or V or J, stamped in the paste; and, although such small marks, indicating the workmen, are singly found on old Wedgwood, the systematic use of three such letters did not begin till about 1845, long after the period of true "Old Wedgwood." In every respect, so far, my portrait-plaque showed itself to be old. Then I compared dates. The portrait shows Nelson's empty right sleeve, though the face is still full, young, and not haggard. Now, Nelson lost his arm at Santa Cruz, when he was thirty-nine years old; when he was rear-admiral, and already in the possession of fame and glory. On the portrait-plaque he wears the rear-admiral's uniform and the collar and star of his Order. The plaque may thus be conjecturally dated at not earlier and little later than 1798.

But Josiah Wedgwood died January 3rd, 1795. So that my plaque is "old Wedgwood," but not the oldest, and not "Josiah"

Wedgwood. It is worth a good deal more than fifteen shillings, both in itself and because it is a contemporary Nelson portrait. Not because of itself, or because *I* possess it, have I devoted this space to discussing it, but because this specimen of analysis and testing may be helpful to readers as an example of how one may scientifically consider a piece of old pottery or china.

Again I turn to the admirable eighteenpenny book on "English Earthenware" (procurable at the South Kensington Museum for a shilling) which was written by Professor Church. "The main mark is the name Wedgwood impressed in the paste before

**The Oldest
Marks.**

firing. The size of the letters varied much—from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in height. Occasionally the initial letter only was a capital letter.

"WEDGWOOD, WEDGWOOD, WEDGWOOD,

"Wedgwood, Wedgwood.

"During the partnership with Bentley his name was conjoined with that of Wedgwood, in similar type to the above, thus WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY. An early mark previous to 1766 consisted of the

name Wedgwood with each letter separately stamped and not



Large Wedgwood Plaque, showing Cameo work on Flat Surface.

exactly in a line. An early partnership mark consists of the names in a circle; in the later ones the word ETRURIA is added, with an inner and outer ring. The mark JOSIAH WEDGWOOD with a date under (as Feb. 2, 1805) belongs to the time when the works were carried on by the son of the founder. The O in the older stamp was always wide; in most of the later ones it is narrower. The marks WEDGEWOOD and WEDGEWOOD & CO. do not belong to the Etruria works . . . H² and 3 (workmen's marks) occur only on small fine cameos of the best time."

In Josiah's day, as now, large quantities of Wedgwood ware were turned out for table use which did not aspire to be considered fine art pottery. But even now, as then, of course, Wedgwood fine art ware is made. I fear the old secret is partly lost, or the old qualities of clay are not used now, but, nevertheless, the finest of

**The Marks since
1845.**

modern Wedgwood ware will be sought after by collectors some day. Messrs. Wedgwood & Sons have lately written me about their "system of marking wares, so that the stamp can approximately date the ware or mark up to the present time," as follows:—

"A piece of ours has three letters stamped on the back in close proximity." (This is, of course, in addition to the name-mark WEDGWOOD, to which, from 1891 onward, the word ENGLAND has been added.) "The first two letters are the private mark of the maker, the last letter represents the year. We go through the alphabet from A to Z, taking a letter for each year, and when Z is reached we start the alphabet again. We are now going through the alphabet for the third time since this system of marking has been in vogue, and we have reached the letter J. We have lately realised, however, that this system is imperfect, as this letter J may stand for 1907, 1881, or 1855, and accordingly we have rearranged matters, giving the maker one letter only (the second one), leaving the third letter to represent the year as heretofore, but altering the first letter to a figure (now 3). When the alphabet is exhausted it will be repeated, but the figure 4 will be stamped in place of the figure 3."



WEDGWOOD
Mark reproduced from back.

Messrs. Wedgwood & Co. further inform me that they have frequently had to proceed against imitators of Wedgwood wares, and infringers of their marks. There are some blue-and-white medallions about with the mark "Wedgwood and Co.," believed to be the work of some potters at Stockton, "who were compelled to disuse it by legal injunction." About 1840, a certain man named Smith made pottery in Holland, and stamped it "Wedgwood."

The additional mark "Etruria" was soon discontinued, as foreign merchants and buyers did not understand it. There is a good story of a South American merchant who wanted some "Wedgwood," and journeyed to the district of Italy which used to be Etruria for it!

"OLD WEDGWOOD."

Collectors need to learn the distinction between "Wedgwood ware" and "Old Wedgwood." By "Wedgwood ware" Josiah Wedgwood wrote in 1770 that he meant "such vessels as are made use of at meals." But of his "tablets" (as he then called his medallions) he wrote: "They are not the ware."

Not long ago the authorities of the Kunst-gewerbe Museum, at Reichenberg, in Bohemia, bought a collection of "Old Wedgwood," and American and Australian museums have lately acquired additions of the same kind. Great collections of "Old Wedgwood" which are announced for auction sale seldom come to the hammer, however; the Tweedmouth Collection (perhaps the most unique of all) was purchased *en bloc* by Mr. W. H. Lever, M.P.; the Sanderson



Lamp-black Basaltes ware Vase.

Collection was similarly acquired, by private treaty, by Messrs. Duveen. It is anything but rash to prophesy that as the years go on "Old Wedgwood" will become more and more scarce and costly in the market; but my readers should note that these remarks do not yet apply to "Wedgwood ware."

"Wedgwood ware," that excellent cream-coloured, plainly pencilled, or transfer-printed neat faience, which was made for use at table, is always graceful, sometimes beautiful, is in every case

suitable to its purpose, and is often collected. It has a value of its own. Its rarity will grow and its value will appreciate. But rarity and costliness in Wedgwood productions at present have reference only to the original Wedgwood's work in jasper and basalt earthenware—"Old Wedgwood" is ornamental work in jasper and basalt. The black basalt work is much the less valuable of the two. There is good jasper ware made by Adams, Turner, &c.

The Distinction.

I have spent some pleasant and instructive hours at Alfred Place West, South Kensington, with Mr. Frederick Rathbone, the chief expert and judge as well as the principal dealer in "Old Wedgwood," who has handled more specimens and made and catalogued more

The Daniel among Judges.

collections of the kind than any other man. Josiah Wedgwood sent much of his productions abroad, to France, Italy, Germany, Holland, and elsewhere in Europe, in the ordinary way of trade. Mr. Rathbone has spent many years (taken all together) in travelling on the Continent, finding bits of "Old Wedgwood," and bringing them back to England. Mr. Rathbone is far from being the mere dealer; he is a man of culture, a traveller, the author of a great book on the subject, a connoisseur, a student, and an enthusiast, as well as a professional expert. Professor Church writes of Mr. Rathbone as having "done more than anyone else in the way of forming the best collections of recent years; a visit to his gallery in Alfred Place West is indeed a treat to the lover of Eighteenth-century ceramic arts. His knowledge of marks and of the other criteria by which the good pieces may be recognised has been freely imparted to connoisseurs."

"Not only the shops but the private dwellings of France, Germany, Italy, Holland, and Belgium have been ransacked,"

Wedgwood-hunting Abroad.

Professor Church goes on, in his capital little book on "Josiah Wedgwood" (2s. 6d.). "One hears of a series of large white-and-lilac jasper plaques being discovered in a little back parlour in Venice; of a fine cameo of the Medusa's head being bought for five lire"—three-and-ninepence, then—"in a broker's shop in a village near Turin; of beautiful medallions set as ornaments in furniture, in clocks, and even in doors in a remote French château. Wedgwood had agencies in several important Continental centres, and the distribution of his ornamental as well as of his useful wares during the last quarter of the Eighteenth century was carried out on an extensive scale." Wedgwood's best customers were French collectors of the Louis XVI. period, Mr. Rathbone tells me, and his Paris agent bore the name of Daguerre.

But collectors should remember that "Wedgwood" which has "England" on it as well as the name-mark is not more than seventeen years old; that pieces with three

A Warning.

letters as well as the name-mark are not likely to be more than sixty-three years old; and that the "Wedgwood" which really counts is at least a hundred years old. For Wedgwood's descendants have gone on in the old works, making pieces in the old style from the old moulds, for a century and more; and it is only "Josiah" Wedgwood pieces which are hunted for, except pieces which were made during

the few years immediately succeeding Josiah's death in 1795. One good test (apart from the marks) is the feel of the surface of "Old Wedgwood." Miss Meteyard compared it with a baby's skin; Professor Church with "ivory, neither dry and chalky-looking on the one hand, nor of waxy smoothness on the other." My own description is that it feels like a clay-pipe which has a film of soap-bubble over it; just the least bit soapy and almost wet. "The surface was neither dull nor shining;" and Professor Church remarks on "the absence of bubbles and holes, the flatness of the field, and the uniformity of grain and surface, without ripples or stringiness." Defects of that kind began to be obvious in "Wedgwood" made about ten years after Josiah Wedgwood died; I believe they are due to incomplete straining of the stuff through sieves. The British Museum Guide says that "Old Wedgwood" has "an almost satiny feeling to the fingers." Another description



of the surface is "like the skin of an apricot." If the jasper be "solid," that is, coloured right through and not white at the back of it, and there are no three letters on it, it is almost sure to be old.

It is a pity that neither at the South Kensington Museum nor the British Museum is a really widely-representative Wedgwood Collection to be seen. One of the richest

Collections.

public collections extant to the public, however, is that at the Nottingham Castle Municipal Museum and Art Gallery. Most public collections do not show the uses to which "Old Wedgwood" was put and intended to be put, but the Manchester Art Gallery collection of "Old Wedgwood," though small, is exempt from that reproach. Like the Nottingham collection, it shows how the lovely little medallions were used, or were meant to be used, in decorating snuff-boxes and workbox-lids, forming bracelets, buttons, necklaces, clasps, &c.

A WEDGWOOD RELIC.

The other day at an inland spa I saw in the window of an old-established small jeweller and watch-mender's shop a Wedgwood brooch, "Old Wedgwood" solid jasper, marked and numbered, set in the original pinchbeck mount, of wheatear pattern, the centre being a lovely Flaxman cameo of the Three Graces: the jeweller was selling off his old stock, and this gem of a brooch was ticketed *one-and-sixpence*. The jeweller knew that the brooch was Wedgwood, but he sold it to me for eighteenpence all the same. However, that is not the Wedgwood relic of which I am now to write.

A relic has been entrusted to me for a while by one of my enthusiastic correspondents. It consists of a sheet of stout old rag-paper, unruled, measuring fifteen inches by nine, and folded in six; the water-mark of the paper is a crown over a shield, which bears a hunting horn, and under the shield are the letters G. B. Endorsed on the *verso* of the folded sheet is "No. 31, Josiah Wedgwood, December 27th, 1785, £96 14s. 8d. Dist. £22 13s. 2d." When the sheet is opened it is seen to be a beautifully-written invoice, headed in copper-plate, the customer's name being written in, of course.

Etruria, December 27th, 1785.

Captain Rattray,

BOUGHT OF JOSIAH WEDGWOOD,
POTTER TO HER MAJESTY.

And from the fact that the last entry in the catalogue of charges is "Expenses at India House, 13s. 6d.," I conclude that the goods were to be carried to India—to Calcutta, Bombay, or Madras. That was in the palmy days of the Honourable East India Company and the white Nabobs who went to India to "shake gold off the pagoda tree." The invoice appears to be in Josiah Wedgwood's own handwriting.

The special interest in this relic of old Josiah lies in the fact that it describes "the ware" (as Josiah called his table services) and prices it. For "a service of best Queen's ware, with a neat blue edge, duplicate pieces, and an additional number of plates," this Captain Rattray (who never expected to have his name in a book like this) was charged £15 11s. 5d. The service contained thirty dishes, "four cushion dishes and covers, two soup terrines, eight sauce terrines, two square salad dishes, two oval root dishes, one trifle dish and stand, four pickle saucers, eight dozen concave plates, three dozen soup plates, and two fish drainers."

For a second service, consisting of the same number of pieces but with a "brown edge," the same sum, £15 11s. 5d., is charged. For a third service, similar in details, but "brown husk border," the charge was £20 4s. 10d. For the "centrepiece" of a dessert service the price was 5s. "Twelve oval-chased teapots, cane colour," cost 8s. each. Eight oval-chased teapots, black, cost 8s. each also. "Egg-shaped fluted" teapots cost 5s. each. "Etruscan painted teapots" cost 7s. 6d. each. A teapot with a "silver grape border" (lustre, no doubt) was charged at half a guinea. And "a complete tea service of best Queen's ware, with a neat green ivy border," was priced at £3 15s. for the whole fifty-eight pieces of it. "Black

bas-relief mugs, silver-mounted," cost 16s. each, but only 12s. each when they were half-pints.

Nearly all the above items were "ware"; but now the invoice goes on to the jasper, or, as it is called to-day, the "Old Wedgwood."

**The Jasper
Items.**

Six "oval jasper medallions, six and a-quarter inches by five and a-quarter," cost three guineas; size five and a half by four and three-quarters, cost 7s. 6d. each; size four by three and three-quarters, cost 5s. each; and others the same size as the last, but less elaborate probably, were priced at 4s. and 3s. Twenty-eight such medallions were sent to Captain Rattray, "in deep black frames," and the twenty-eight frames were charged at 2s. each. Where are those framed medallions



"An Offering to Peace."

now? And what portraits or designs did they show? I don't suppose that Captain Rattray knew or cared much what portraits or designs they showed, for I conclude that, as Captain of an East Indiaman, he took "the ware" and the "jasper" out on spec. to Calcutta; rich were the perquisites of merchant captains then. But perhaps Wedgwood had an agent at Calcutta? In any case, I should think the cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and perhaps also Simla, would be good hunting-grounds for "Wedgwood" to-day.

GREEN FROG WARE.

Green frog ware! What is it? Who has ever seen a piece of it? How many of us have ever heard of it before? I do not mean those ceramic jests, the beer-mugs with a "jumping frog" (as

Mark Twain would say) at the bottom of them—those brownish-yellow mugs which are forged by the thousand now. No, I mean green frog ware, the *only* green frog ware, the style which, next to Henri II. or Oiron ware, is perhaps the rarest of earthenware to-day. If a reader could only come across a sample of it, I suppose no price in reason would be impossible. Green frog ware was made in England, but Russia is the land in which to hunt for it to-day.

The mark of it is a green frog *rampant gardant* (as heralds say); the green frog is painted *on the face of the ware*; it is not a trade mark at the back. Being both rampant and gardant the frog is up on his hind legs and full face at you, quite a fierce kind of frog, in

**The Green Frog
Described.**

fact. He is painted in that peculiar laurel-green tint which you find on old Bristol porcelain, and on Spode and Minton imitations of old Bristol laurel-wreathed plates and cups and saucers. You could not fail to know him if you saw him; he is from half an inch to three-quarters of an inch tall. And he is the very rarest and most imperial of all frogs.

I suppose there never yet was an exclusive set of china or earthenware supplied for a particular customer without a few extra pieces being made; extra pieces, or slightly faulty pieces, or trial pieces, or pieces pocketed as curiosities and mementoes by the workmen, were sure to remain over. And I suppose there never yet was an exclusive set of china or earthenware which always kept itself together complete and unpilfered in the butler's pantry, the china-closet, or the draining racks; thefts or leakages from great houses have fed the curio market ever since fine glass and porcelain and crockery began to be. As a matter of fact Professor Church says that "some duplicate specimens of plates and cups belonging to this service still remain in England." And I'll warrant that some abstracted or cast-aside bits of green frog ware are to be found in St. Petersburg, if none of them have reached as far as England yet.

Green frog ware is English earthenware, made in Staffordshire in 1774. It is cream ware or Queen's ware, that soft, pale, buff-coloured crockery which Wedgwood first, and then other Staffordshire potters, and then "Leeds" produced. Nine hundred and fifty-two perfect and finished and delivered pieces of it were made, the potting costing only £51 8s. 4d., but the decoration in enamel painting more than £2,200. Catherine II. of Russia had heard of Wedgwood Queen's ware and of English scenery, and the great Empress commanded Josiah Wedgwood to supply her with "a vast cream ware service for every purpose of the table," deciding that on every piece of it a view of "British scenery" should be enamelled. In the summer of 1774 the service was on view at Wedgwood's showrooms in Greek Street, and Mrs. Delany described it as "the ground, the common ware pale brimstone, the drawings in purple, the borders a wreath of leaves, the middle of each piece a particular view of all the remarkable places in the King's dominions." Mrs. Delany must have been a little colour-blind, for Wedgwood himself stated that the drawings were "copied in monochrome enamel of a delicate black, which permits a shading and a finish," and done

**When and How it
was Made.**

in black are the landscapes on the three plates that are kept in Messrs. Wedgwood's museum at Burslem. The ware was "ornamented with different views"—there were 1,280 "views" altogether, and no two alike—"of the Ruins, country houses, parks, gardens, and picturesque landscapes of Great Britain."

"British scenery" had, in fact, become a Continental rage; Staffordshire was sending earthenware printed with pictures of British scenery all over Europe. That every Englishman was a Milord, rolling in carriages and wealth, the Continent had long known,

**British Scenery on
Earthenware.**

and the Continent had begun to learn from platter pictures that Britain was a land of gentlemen's seats situate amidst arable scenery, where rich John Bulls in top hats shot or fished through arable landscapes, their mansions in the distance; sporting Milords and mansions and crockery being obviously the chief productions of our happy land.

Said Wedgwood to Bentley, when the Russian order came: "All the parks and gardens in England won't furnish views sufficient." Said Bentley to Wedgwood: "We must send draughtsmen all over the country to take real views, of real buildings"—"buildings" were "British scenery" then, you see. And though Wedgwood was "quite perswaded" that "not enough Gothique buildings" could be found, draughtsmen were despatched with camera-obscuras to every part of this island, while Bentley advertised for prints and drawings of "the most embellished views, the most beautiful landscapes, with Gothique ruins, Grecian temples, and the most elegant buildings" that Britain could boast.

I suppose the Baltic would not quite be closed by ice before they got the green frog ware away from Greek Street, and by ship

**Where the Ware
is Now.**

to Russia, so that very likely Catherine and Potemkin would dine off it that autumn at the Palace of the Froggery—la Grenouillière—at Tsarskoe-selo, fourteen miles south of St. Petersburg. At any rate, in that palace rests all that has not been broken or stolen of the 952 pieces which were despatched thither. But where are the odd and remaining-over pieces? I keep an eye open in London, myself, for bits of that green frog ware. It rather resembles Leeds ware, by the by.

ABOUT LEEDS CREAM WARE.

The principal and distinctive Leeds earthenware—the Leeds ware, as many collectors think of it—was cream ware, a variety of Queen's ware, which the firm of Hartley, Greens & Company began to produce at the Leeds pottery about the year 1783. It is eagerly bought by collectors, and as its chief markets were abroad there is not a great deal of "Leeds" still extant in England. Yet, all the same, a wide-awake collector may still pick up pieces of it here at prices wonderfully low. That is because the small dealers and furniture brokers know next to nothing about it; in their eyes all "Leeds" must be lace-like pierced ware, which is by no means the case; and, therefore, they undervalue any "Leeds" which is not pierced ware that may come into their hands.

How may we know pierced or non-pierced Leeds cream ware when we see it? First, of all by weight. "Leeds" is exceptionally light-weight for its size; this is a cardinal point. Secondly, by the colour, lastingness, and lie of the glaze. The cream-ware Leeds glaze has a decidedly perceptible tinge of green. It is a yellowish-green—not bluish like the Lowestoft glaze, but warmly green, the green of a yellowing apple. Though the Leeds cream ware glaze lies smoothly and thinly enough, it afforded a denser protection for the paste underneath it than the glaze of Wedgwood cream ware did; usually, Leeds cream ware is very little scratched. Leeds cream ware glaze ran a little thickly into the hollows and interstices and bases, where it shows the green hue very plainly. But the green cast can be seen elsewhere, it shows all over, inside and out. Then, further, the glaze is very seldom crazed. And "a smooth, rich cream colour" is the tone of the whole.

**The
Characteristics
to Remember.**

Next comes the test of decoration. "Many of the pieces show flutings, gadrooning, leafage, and the double-twisted and foliated handles," says Professor Church, with admirable terseness and accuracy, "but the most notable feature of the greater number of the pieces (to which ornament could be applied) consists of stamped perforations, generally arranged in geometrical patterns. These openings are usually of the rice-grain form, and are cut with great sharpness and accuracy." Yet it must not be supposed that all pierced cream ware is "Leeds"; the collector should apply the tests as to weight, colour of glaze, and so forth, which I have mentioned above.

Marks are little to go by; not one in a hundred pieces of Leeds cream ware is marked at all. Some of the marks which books ascribe to Leeds are most unreliable. In

The Marks.

Kidson's "Historical Notices of the Leeds Old Pottery" (the standard book on the subject) the following alleged Leeds marks are rejected:—

1. An arrow-head, either alone or in conjunction with the letters C. G.

2. A crown and the letters C. G. W. (Chaffers gives a crown under the letter G., but this is only true of Leeds white ware.)

The authenticated cream ware marks are LEEDS * POTTERY impressed in the clay; sometimes, also, those words repeated twice, crossing each other, with the asterisk at the centre of the cross; also, HARTLEY, GREENS and Co., with LEEDS POTTERY under the name of the firm, either in horizontal lines or in curves, and with or without the asterisk. Also, but extremely rarely, L. P. It should be noted that R. B. and S., and an old English L. within a Gothic quatrefoil in a circle, were marks used between 1863 and 1878, when the Pottery was coming to its end.

It is conjectured that the omission of marks on Leeds cream ware was intentional, so that foreign customers might mistake it for Wedgwood's. I possess a cup and saucer which are undoubtedly "Leeds," but the cup is marked WEDGWOOD—fraudulently, of course; yet there is also an L., as a saving confession. Most of the early teaware pieces, which were *turned*, show a small, deep-cut circle, due to the action of the lathe, and this is considered

a characteristic mark; seen in porcelain, it usually means "Worcester."

Teaware was an important product of the Leeds Pottery, but most of the cups and saucers made there have disappeared; Leeds cups and saucers are much more rarely seen

Leeds Teaware. to-day than Leeds teapots. There were teacups with handles and teacups without them. About

Leeds teapots there are some particularities not found in other makes. The twisted handle (two handles, the one curving across and within the other) is characteristic; the ends of the handles are joined to the pot by little flower or leaf-like attachments; the handles are fluted. Often the knob of the lid resembles a flower. The spout is hardly ever straight, but nearly always curved; usually at its base, and not seldom at its lip, there is embossed leafage embracing and supporting (so to speak) the underpart of the spout. The bodies of the teapots were "either globular or cylindrical, and either fluted or plain. Some of the round teapots have a small pierced and raised border running round the top"—a kind of battlement. The sugar basins, like the teapots, were globular or cylindrical, and they, too, had a flower-like knob and twisted handles, often. Teaware and plates adorned "with exquisite running patterns in colours" were produced in the Queen's ware style, and are now often mistaken for Wedgwood, as they were at the time, no doubt. There were also hot-water kettles, to stand at table over a spirit lamp; I found one of them at Liège the other day, quite a huge kettle, and in spite of its size and fragility still perfect; the price was thirty francs.

In fact, the best hunting-ground for "Leeds" is on the Continent now. Large quantities were sent to Prussia, Bavaria, Austria, and Holland. Cruet stands were made, with

**Foreign Sales
and Searchings.**

their castor bottles, the top of the handle being a German or Austrian eagle, and the names of the condiments painted on the castors in the language of the land to which they were to be exported. These foreign names and other inscriptions often puzzle an English collector when abroad; he thinks that the ware, too, must be Continental. But the Continental-made cream ware imitated "Wedgwood" and "Leeds" very badly indeed.

A good deal of plain and undecorated "Leeds" was painted on and refired abroad. Not very infrequently one sees in England, and often one sees in Holland and Belgium, "Leeds" and "Wedgwood" that has been painted by foreign artists in their native style. One sees plates decorated with rather poorly rendered roses, bricky in colour. Sometimes the plates have Dutch or Flemish names enamelled on them. There is one favourite design of a Prince and Princess of Orange, separated by a fruiting orange tree; and there are plates painted with a crude representation of the Crucifixion. Then there are "figures of Liberty and other emblems," having the inscription:—

"Voor Vryheid en Vaderland."

But when these appear in black transfer-printing the probability is that they were decorated at Leeds, before export to the Vaderland at all.

The difficulty which dissuades one from acquiring "Leeds"

abroad is the danger of breaking in transit. "Leeds," more fragile in appearance than in reality, is, in reality, quite fragile and friable enough, even in repose. That is one reason why its value will appreciate, through scarcity. I counsel my readers not to miss a bit of "Leeds" going cheaply. I have put down here a few indications and tips that are not to be found in the ordinary books on ceramics about this ware, so graceful in shape, so delicate in dimensions, so pleasant in hue, and so rich in truly artistic design. A sideboard or cabinet decked with Leeds cream ware and "Adam" Sheffield plate is a continual feast to the eye.

LEEDS PRINTED POTTERY.

I rather sympathise with collectors who decline to buy porcelain but eagerly purchase any fine piece of old English pottery which they come across. For undoubtedly our old English porcelain-makers copied shamelessly from the Orient, Germany, and France; while English earthenware is almost all of it indigenous and purely original. One is therefore glad to know that the cult of old English pottery grows in favour among collectors; and there is hardly any old English earthenware more interesting to acquire than "Leeds." It is true that "Leeds" copied largely from "Wedgwood," in cream ware and black basalt. But "Leeds" was an English copy of something entirely English, and so it may pass muster, according to the nativity test.

Josiah Wedgwood sent his Queen's ware to Liverpool, to be transfer-printed in the workshops of Sadler & Green. Hartley, Greens & Co. sent "Leeds" cream ware to Liverpool to be transfer-printed also. Wedgwood's wagons went tinkling across the Cheshire heaths to Liverpool; the wagons from Leeds went over the Pennines, *via* Batley, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, and through the gorge which the railway now follows near Oldham. After a time Wedgwood did his own transfer-printing at Etruria; so probably at Leeds did Hartley, Greens & Co. But Leeds did not use transfer-printing very much. The chief trade in "Leeds" lay abroad, and Continental customers seemed not to have cared much for printed ornamentation in those days; at any rate not much transfer-printed "Leeds" has been found abroad, except in Holland. When I speak of "transfer-printed," I mean printed in black, so far.

The earliest pieces of Leeds transfer-printed ware are thought to be those which show peacocks, pheasants, parrots, and other exotic birds in the Chelsea style; these are very finely rendered from artistically-engraved plates. This kind of "Leeds" appears to have been made in dessert services only, and shows the fine pierced or feathered rims which so many people suppose to mark the only "Leeds."

"Wedgwood" had a transfer-print of a lady and gentleman taking tea in a garden, a negro servant in attendance. Wedgwood's version of that subject differed as much from the original version, done by Hancock, the engraver for Battersea enamels, as from the one used on porcelain at Bow, and also from the one used at

Worcester. The "Leeds" tea-party picture is identical with Wedgwood's; probably the same copper-plate was used for both by Sadler & Green. Similarly, at Liverpool, certain masonic emblems were printed on Leeds ware, and also allegorical figures of women, representing Faith, Hope, and Charity. A portrait of John Wesley, surrounded with laurels and palms, was used on teapots made at Leeds.

This black-printed "Leeds" is sufficiently rare to make it valuable, more valuable than the plain cream ware—except the most elaborately pierced pieces of plain cream ware, that is. It will be understood that all black-printed ware of the "Liverpool" type is printed *over* the glaze. The blue-printed, which I am about to describe, was printed *under* the glaze always. The distinction is important.

For in later years Leeds began to make and send forth large quantities of hard and whitish table ware, light in weight, and printed with designs in a "Nankin" blue of various shades. The blue printing is under glaze, I repeat, and the glaze itself is bluish, and very shiny and pellucid. The first design used for this ware was a kind of imitation of the Caughley willow pattern. There are two varieties of the Leeds willow pattern; the later variety resembles the ordinary willow pattern, the earlier has the temple to the left of the user of the plate, instead of to the right, and is in other ways so different from the Caughley pattern as to be almost original. You cannot fail to recognise it at sight.

Moreover, nearly every extant piece of Leeds willow pattern bears the impressed mark, "Leeds * Pottery." It is curious that this should be so, when one considers how rare the mark is on Leeds cream ware.

The earliest printed blue was a dark and full-bodied colour; gradually this was changed to lighter and lighter tints, until the hue became more violet than blue. Lilac, green, and brown were also used for this under-glaze printing.

The early blue-printed "Leeds" shows marks caused by the cockspurs on which the pieces rested while being baked. "Cockspurs" were tiny pyramids of baked clay. Three of them were used to separate each plate or dish from its next neighbour as it stood in the saggar or receptacle within the kiln. On the bottom of the saggar three cockspurs were placed, and the first plate was laid upside down on the three points of the three small pyramids. Then three cockspurs were placed on the top of that plate (the "top" at that moment being the plate's back), and on the three upmost points of those cockspurs another plate or dish was deposited, upside down. The consequence was that the face of the plate when baked showed three cockspur marks, and the back of it nine—arising from the three points at the base of each cockspur.

I need hardly point out that "spur-marks," produced in something the same way, are a characteristic of the earliest "Chelsea." I have described a cockspur roughly as being a pyramid, but the nine little marks—three threes—perceptible on the back of a Leeds willow-pattern plate will be understood better if the reader thinks

of the shape of a gamecock's foot, three claws in front and the spur behind.

Leeds turned out small plates for children to use at table, printed with verses of hymns or with proverbs, or with Scripture pictures, and rimmed with embossed and tinted flowers. There were also "Cottage" plates, printed in a purplish-brown, with pictures of cottages and cottagers. Sea-shells were sometimes the subject of the decoration, but they do not resemble the bat-printed sea-shells done at Worcester.

I do not think that transfer-printing to outline a design afterwards to be coloured by hand was much done at Leeds, but there

is a fair amount of "Leeds" wholly hand-painted in green and red and violet. I have a marked cream-ware plate, and one unmarked, which show the brick-red roses and the crude green or violet leaves which the Leeds painters used to produce with their brushes. I have a Leeds chestnut bowl and stand, copied from Wedgwood, who copied it first from open silver work; the Leeds work is finer than the "Wedgwood," and is neatly painted with leaves in violet. Earthenware like "Staffordshire," but a little yellow, and painted with mandarin designs gilded, was made to a small extent.

There was a tendency for the enamel-colours fired at Leeds to peel off (very much as "Swansea" peels), particularly the green enamel colour. Sometimes an iridescence is left where this peeling has taken place.

"Leeds" was also painted with mottoes, texts, sporting scenes, true-love knots, farm scenes, and Chinese subjects. Little gilding was used at Leeds, and the gilding never wore well. But for a painted and gilded Leeds teapot, quite small, £9 was obtained the other day.

LEEDS BUSTS AND FIGURES.

The Leeds Pottery from 1780 onward not only produced cream ware, black transfer-printed ware, blue printed ware, and painted ware, but also a kind of black basalt ware, and a good many figures and busts. As to the black basalt that came out of the kilns at Leeds I will write nothing; basalt ware has never been popular; even Wedgwood's basalt ware (except

Basalt Ware.

some of the medallions and busts in it) is not sought after. As for the basalt ware that Spode, Turner, Adams, Palmer, Neale, the Woods, and other Staffordshire potters, like Hartley, Green & Co., at Leeds, sent forth, it is seldom beautiful or agreeable to look at, and up to the present it has never been a remunerative thing to collect. But the busts and figures produced at Leeds in cream or coloured ware are quite another story.

You are not unlikely to come across rough small figures decorated with "slip," pale, clumsy sheep that look rather like dogs, cows turned into milk-jugs, sitting boys,

The Early Figures.

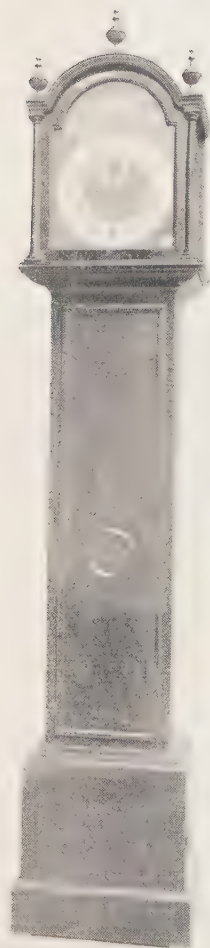
and a boy and a girl standing at the side of a grandfather clock without a dial, the omission leaving an opening to serve as a watch-stand; with other tawdry



Queen Anne
Grandfather Clock.
(Page 103.)



Three Chelsea Knick-Knacks.
(Page 43.)



Early Georgian
Grandfather Clock.
(Page 103.)



Wedgwood.

(Page 70.)

and heavy little old figures made in a white clay and splashed with yellow and green and blue. It is believed that these, or some of them, were produced at the Leeds pottery prior to the year 1775. But, a few years later than that, cottage ornament figures of a finer kind began to be potted. Enoch Wood and Walton and other Staffordshire people were doing a roaring trade in cottage ornament figures, and the firm at Leeds thought they might take a hand in it too. Consequently, the Leeds figures and busts, as a whole, resemble the Staffordshire busts and figures rather closely: they were terribly imitative potters at Leeds!

It would be an interesting piece of research to trace out how pottery after pottery copied from each other, in this matter of

**The Pedigree of
Cottage Ornament
Figures.**

figures and busts to ornament cottage and farm-house mantelpieces. Probably the cult of statuettes in porcelain began at Meissen (Dresden) in what the French at that period called "*figurines de Saxe*." Sèvres copied these from Dresden; Chelsea and Bow copied them from Dresden and Sèvres. Derby copied them from Chelsea (having inherited the actual models), and in the biscuit figures Derby copied from Sèvres. Then Staffordshire began to copy Chelsea and Derby porcelain figures in earthenware, and very grotesque and far-off copies they were; Swansea copied them in earthenware also. Then Leeds copied the Staffordshire copies, and also those wholly original figures which Staffordshire had devised and produced. In fact it would not be difficult to draw a family tree of porcelain and earthenwares, showing affiliations all the way. Dwight's Fulham ware figures are the original English efforts in that kind, and preceded even Dresden figures, of course; so that the origin rests with us.

The Leeds figures which interest collectors most are those potted in cream ware and in white ware. The white-ware figures

**The Finer Leeds
Figures.**

have a bluish glaze, the cream-ware figures show a glaze that is greenish. The cream-ware figures were seldom touched with colours, but sometimes a chocolate tint was applied to portions of them, particularly to the bases, in a line; this line of chocolate-brown, upon the plinth, or the straps of sandals, or the waistband, is highly characteristic of Leeds. So are chocolate and other coloured spots over the dress, like sprigs in muslin. But as both these are also found in Staffordshire figures, some other witness is needful to prove a figure which shows either of them to have hailed from Leeds. It is here where the characteristic "Leeds" minimum of weight comes into play as a criterion, and also the characteristic "Leeds" glaze; an acquaintance with Leeds cream ware in general is necessary in order to know a Leeds cream-ware figure for certain. Further, there is something of Wedgwood's classicality about the Leeds cream-ware figures very often. Sometimes one may see Leeds cream-ware figures, absolutely uncoloured, that seem to show a French origin; they also are copies. Figures were used as parts of the famous Leeds centre-pieces, and also to form candlesticks; these are in pure cream-colour.

There is a Leeds pair of *Musicians*, the man with feathers in his hat and strumming upon a kind of tambourine, the woman

with her hair arranged in butterfly shape and playing a kind of lute. The Leeds figure of "Andromache weeping over the ashes of Hector" is large, touched with colours and gilding, and, of course, highly classical. Leeds produced a version of Venus Amphitrite, with Cupid at one side of her and a dolphin at the other; this was copied from the well-known Staffordshire coloured versions, which themselves were copies from Whieldon's originals in pale buff and green glaze; there is a Neptune to match. Another "Leeds" figure, also produced in several potteries, was St. George and the Dragon, the colours and the glaze being very bright. There is also a Girl Reading, which is a particularly graceful figure.

A word must be said as to the representations of animals which were turned out at Leeds. The Leeds horse was made for use as a horse-doctor's or druggist's sign. The base is about 15 ins. long, and a fern-like pattern ornaments it. The height of the horse is about 17 ins., and its body is white, or cream-coloured, or spotted, in different examples. Then there is the Leeds lion, a copy of the Wedgwood lion, with its paw upon a ball; this differs from the lion made in Wedgwood's Queen's ware by showing an embossed floral pattern along the plinth. The Leeds lamb is a very wooden little beast, standing upon a flat base.

I do not think that Leeds ever produced a Toby jug; the Tobies in pale straw and green hues, which are sometimes called

The Busts.

"Leeds," are much more likely to be Whieldon's. But Leeds produced a bust of John Wesley, distinguishable by its light weight, and its bluish glaze over pale-coloured paste; the modelling of this is not so good as Wood put into his bust of John Wesley. Also there is a fine "Leeds" bust of Shakespeare, more resembling Roubiliac's version than any Staffordshire Shakespeare bust; it has a whitish paste and a bluish glaze.

But the finest busts ever produced at Leeds are those called "Air" and "Water". Examples are to be seen at the British Museum; "Air" has a chubby, curly head, and the skin of an albatross is cast around the shoulders. They stand upon upright square plinths or pedestals, which are decorated by a wreath around a disc.

The demand for fine Staffordshire figures has grown to be so keen that Leeds figures, often called "Staffordshire," are now exceedingly difficult to find cheaply. For a

Addenda.

statuette of Shakespeare, 18 ins. high, mounted on a lustrated pedestal, marked "Leeds Pottery," and dated "1790," the price of ten guineas was recently paid. The modelling of the Leeds figures and busts was, on the whole, superior to the modelling of those made in Staffordshire, and when the Leeds figures and busts now classed as Staffordshire are known and separated from the Staffordshire examples, the price for such fine "Leeds" will go higher still.

SECTION III.

BAXTER PRINTS.

THE process by which George Baxter produced those wonderful oil-colour prints of his, that are so often collected to-day, is "wropt in mistry" still, though bit by bit we are discovering some of the puzzle. Baxter died in 1867, and his secret is said to have died with him; Baxter prints have, at any rate, ceased to be produced; his work has passed into the realm of lost arts.

Baxter prints formed the frontispieces and vignettes of not a few books in the forties and fifties of last century. The earliest known Baxter prints illustrated "The Feathered Tribes," a book published in 1834. There are Baxter pictures in "The Persecution of Christians in Madagascar" and other books about missions.

Baxter also issued many portraits, about $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches long by 3 inches wide. He put some of his best work into these. But after a while a demand for Baxter prints, as pictures pure and simple, was created, and it is these which form the bulk of the work.

To be in best condition a Baxter print ought to be clean and unfaded, and to show (1) good margins or mounts, (2) the imprint of the name and address of Baxter at a bottom corner of the picture itself, or (3) the name and address embossed in white or stamped in red on the margin or mount, or (4) both (2) and (3). The imprint or emboss was usually "Printed in Oil Colours by Geo. Baxter" (or G. Baxter), "Patentee," followed by his business address at the time. He seems to have had four business addresses—first 29, King Square, then 3, Charterhouse Square, then 11, Northampton Square, and then 11 and 12, Northampton Square.

I saw a large modern forgery of a Baxter print put up for auction not long ago, and shams may be expected to multiply. There are also contemporaneous productions of which one must beware; unless, indeed, one is collecting the contemporaneous imitations. Baxter's principal licensees were (1) Le Blond and (2) Kronheim. I possess one of the rare works of another licensee firm, Bradshaw & Blacklock. The imprints of the licensees sometimes contain the word "Baxter," and that misleads occasionally. Licensee prints of medium size are worth only two or three shillings to-day, but it is quite likely that licensee prints may become much sought after. The licensees did not always print their names, but their work may be known by its inferiority in hue, finish, and tone to those of a real "Baxter."

It is believed that Baxter worked in the following way: His earliest prints were produced from wood blocks only. If you find a Baxter print which, under the colour, shows

Baxter's Method. hardly any engraving, it will be a very early piece of Baxter's work. That method of beginning the print only lasted two years or so. About 1836 he began to use for the first impression in printer's ink an engraving in

metal; copper first, probably, and then, as the demand grew, the more durable steel. Having printed the basal picture in black, brown, or purple, he then began to work upon it with wood blocks, each charged with a different colour, printing colour after colour and colour upon colour, when each had dried, much as chromo-lithographers used to do before the "three-colour" process killed chromo-lithography proper. Sometimes more than twenty, often as many as twenty, and hardly ever less than eight different colour-printings took place with each print.

No doubt a part of his "secret" was his exquisite adjustment of block after block to the right places on the paper; they hardly ever failed to "register" as colour-printers say, to the hundredth part of an inch. But part of his "secret" also lay in his choice and mixing of colours. His licensees had his mechanical appliances and his instructions at their command, but they never produced pictures so brilliant, yet so harmonised and toned, as his.

A collector of Baxters can hardly know too much about the process which produced the prints, any more than a collector of English porcelain can know too much about the ingredients of the paste which composed the body of the ware.

For instance, as to the wonderfully exact way in which Baxter's eight to twenty wood blocks for each print "registered," exactly into the proper places, one after the other. "Baxter proceeded, first, to have the design engraved on a copper or steel plate, on stone or zinc, marking several spots or points on the plate or stone, in order to serve as register marks," the *British and Colonial Printer and Stationer* tells us. "They were very minute, and so placed as to be hidden by the colour when laid on. Impressions of the print having been taken, they were transferred to the colouring blocks, each of which was then cut away so as to leave only its own coloured part in relief. Having taken the desired number of black-and-white impressions, and placed the necessary block in the press for the first colour, there were four or five more points provided on the tympan" (a rectangular frame hinged by one edge to the carriage of a printing-press, and having stretched across it a piece of cloth or parchment). "There were also a number of other points on the tympan, which were caused to strike through the paper in putting the first printing in colour, the point holes thus produced being used for the purpose of securing a correct register in all the future impressions from the colour blocks."

In the preface to the "Pictorial Album or Cabinet of Paintings," published by Chapman & Hall in 1837, in quarto (even a poor copy of which now sells for £5), Baxter said: "The first impression, forming a ground, is from a steel plate; and above this ground, which is usually a neutral tint, the positive colours are impressed from as many wood blocks as there are distinctive tints in the picture. . . . The very tint of the paper upon which each imitative painting appears to be mounted is communicated from a smooth plate of copper, which receives the colour and is printed in the same manner as a wood block." This last remark has reference only to the ten plates and vignette title of the "Cabinet of Paintings," for the "mounts" of them are not really mounts. It does not refer to what are called the "original mounts" of the

subsequent prints, which were published separately as prints; "original mount" in those cases meaning the stamped thin cardboard to which the prints were made to adhere.

These real mounts, the "original mounts," usually bore Baxter's embossed imprint, and collectors should note that the imprint on the mount, when it exists in addition to the signature on the picture itself, adds considerably to the market value of a Baxter. The imprint on a mount usually took the shape of an oval surmounted by a crown.

I quote from the *British and Colonial Printer and Stationer* again: "Seeing that most of the best prints emanated from

**What was Baxter's
Secret.**

Baxter's own workshop, it has been suggested that he excelled in the composition of his colours, which his licensees and successors found a difficulty in preparing properly. One peculiarity of his work is its conscientiousness. The engraving in every case, even when very minute, has every detail carefully represented. Then, again, he always employed the very best colours and the very best paper, of a quality which the trade say could hardly be reproduced to-day. But mere materials did not make the process. The *secret* lay in the fact that Baxter personally superintended the work from first to last, personally engraved the plates, and the whole process was under the actual direction of one man, who saw it through in all its stages. The fact that he himself was an excellent workman, with an infinite capacity for taking pains, was the cause of his work being of such a character that no process of colour-printing had ever got near to its standard before his time."

BAXTER'S CHIAROSCURO.

Harrison Weir, the ablest draughtsman of animals on wood England ever saw, was an apprentice of George Baxter. He applied a modification of the Baxter process to the printing of some of his work. I possess his "Book of Animals," published in 1857 by Adams & Co., which contains twenty-four full-page plates of animals, exquisitely drawn, and loosely colour-printed by blocks in a kind of chiaroscuro, somewhat resembling the process which Baxter patented. But that was not the true chiaroscuro, because the shading and lights were given by the woodcut first.

Chiaro-oscuro, or chiaroscuro, is, of course, an Italian term meaning clear-obscure, or the distribution of lights and shadows in

**Chiaro-oscuro
Work.**

a picture. Only by the proper use of light and shade in a picture are the objects made to seem near or distant, to produce a mutual effect on each other, and to form an united and natural-seeming whole. In a water-colour drawing, sepia, or ink sketch, or an oil-painting, the shades and the lights are created in sepia, ink, or colour, or by the absence of sepia, ink, or colour, with the brush. In an engraving, etching, or woodcut, the light and shade are given by the lines, their massing together for the shadows, or their slightness, apartness, or feyness for the lights. Baxter began his colour-printing by giving light and shade as a painter does, that is, by colour only, and not by lines either massed or omitted. His first print was "Butterflies," dated from 29, King Square, in 1829. He appears to have issued

nothing else till 1834, but the prints then published, and most of those published in 1835, were (like "Butterflies") pure chiaroscuro work in water-colour, the coloured blocks being used as brushes (so to speak) to produce them. I possess one of the finest of these early prints, in which not a single engraved line, *not even the merest outline*, appears. Mr. R. Mudie, author of "The Feathered Tribes of the British Islands," published in 1834, wrote in the preface that "In these vignettes Mr. Baxter had no coloured copy for the birds, which are from nature. I made him work from mere scratches in outline, in order to test his metal." I prefer these chiaroscuro prints of his to the others, myself; the frontispiece to "Social Tales" is as soft as an early water-colour drawing, indeed. But by 1835, when Baxter patented his amended process, he had become convinced of the practical value of an engraving as the basis and first foundation for his work, and Baxter prints issued after that were not done in chiaroscuro proper. That is to say, the lights and the shadows thenceforward existed, in part at any rate, in the basal print, before the tints began to be put on—in oil-colour, not water-colour, now; though, of course, the colours were so chosen and so used as to warm and deepen the shadows and tone off the too great whiteness of the lights. In some of the early chiaroscuro prints even the lights were printed in white pigment, however.

In his preface to the catalogue of the Baxter Exhibition, which was held in Birmingham in 1894, Mr. J. H. Slater, editor of

**Mr. Slater's
Definition.**

Book Prices Current, and an authority on prints, adopted a less severe use of the words "chiaroscuro printing" than I have done above. He wrote, "Baxter's art was in reality not at all mechanical, nor was it, strictly speaking, a process. The words 'process' and 'patent' have all along conveyed an impression to superficial observers which it is, above all things, the object of his admirers to dissipate. Baxter worked in *chiaro-oscuro*, a form of art that has been immortalised by the magic touch of Ugo da Carpi, Lucas van Leyden, Heinrich Goltzius, and a score of other masters, who will live as long as art endures. To produce a good *chiaro-oscuro* effect is the most difficult process, if we must have the word, that can well be imagined.

"By it pictures are built up, so to speak, by the super-imposition of one block with another, till the complete design stands out. The old German masters used but two blocks, as a rule; the Italian masters, at the head of whom stands Ugo da Carpi, three, or sometimes four. The usual practice was to print the outlines only from the first block, leaving the details and those graduations of light and shade which are the life and soul of all artistic effect to the second and subsequent blocks, used one at a time, as each preceding impression became dry on the paper. . . . From the earliest infancy of the art of engraving until now, not twenty masters of this style have attained a front rank, and it is safe to say that not half of these stand on a level with the world's greatest masters in other branches of art. With these few it is claimed that Baxter is entitled by his genius to consort."

Baxter's light and shade after 1835 did not depend on his colour only. "Unlike all other artists," Mr. Slater says, "he first

etched or graved his design on a metal plate, so that an impression from that gave a perfect and complete picture. Subsequently he introduced the proper colours and tints by means of a sequence of wood blocks. It will be seen that his process differed from that of any of the old masters. His was a perfect design from the beginning; it was the colouring only that was built up; theirs involved the building up of the whole design, little by little, till the required result was obtained."

The British and Colonial Printer and Stationer published the following definition of Baxter's method: "This method was a

Another Definition.	sort of modification of the old chiaroscuro idea, and in a way foreshadowed the coming of chromo-lithography. After chromo-lithography
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by graduated tints had been introduced, Baxter tried to some extent to imitate the effects produced by means of a modification in his own methods of procedure." In his early days Baxter had tried his hand at lithography, and the first volume of Horsfield's 'History of Lewes' (1824) contains a few lithos by him." But he did not use litho-printing for his colour-prints ever. The plates for the first printing were engraved in aquatint as a rule. He *condemned* lithography, but there are lithographed Baxter "fakes" to beware of.

Prints in Bartolozzi red, black, or violet colour have been struck off from the old Baxter plates, many of which went to the neighbourhood of Sheffield; dealers stock them, and sometimes put them into old frames.

A Warning.

Again, I saw the other day a Le Blond colour-print of "Come, Pretty Robin!" from which Le Blond's name had been removed by cutting a strip off the edge. That is quite a common fraud; but in this case Baxter's name had been printed *on* the picture, in black. The fake revealed itself, however, in the dullness and absence of glaze where the forger's inked type had been pressed on. In one sense the forger is the man who proves the merit of the work which he counterfeits. Every dealer now says that Baxters are on the up-grade; and the forgers know it to be so. At the Mockler sale, in Birmingham, a dozen years ago or so, many thousands of Le Blond prints were dispersed, and these are made the raw material of the forgeries; very often, too, with Le Blond's name cut off, they are taken for genuine Baxters.

EXPERIENCES OF A BAXTER COLLECTOR.

A very quiet old gentleman came into my study and handed me the following statement:—

"After leaving school I became interested in Baxter prints, through my father showing me some and advising me to make a hobby of collecting them. About 1880 I happened to go into a photographic shop and asked the owner if he had ever seen any of Baxter's prints. 'Oh yes,' he said; 'the travellers used to come round with samples. What killed the sale was the introduction of German lithograph imitations. I think I've got a parcel of Baxters still,' which he found, and I purchased the lot, of about fifty, for five shillings.

"About this time an artist friend of mine asked me if I could put him up for a night or two, and, in the course of conversation, I showed him some of my Baxter prints. 'Why, I've got a big boxful at home; I don't think much of them,' he said. 'My father went to Baxter's sale'"—auction sales of Baxter prints took place in most of the larger towns about the year 1862—"and bought a lot of prints; they were kept in our big play-box when we were children."

"I told him I would give him ten pounds for the lot if he would send the box to me at once before opening it. We struck the bargain, and I found the box contained some thousands of prints of all sizes and conditions and in *original 'states'*. Besides these, there were proofs from the plates and blocks in all 'states' and conditions, and some with notes on the margins made by Baxter himself.

"After this I determined to find out, if possible, what had become of the plates and blocks, but it was quite by accident that I learned from a man in Bristol the name of the person who had purchased them. In the first instance they had been bought by Vincent Brookes, and afterwards sold to Le Blond.

"When first Le Blond had the plates and blocks he struck off and issued many with Baxter's name remaining on the plates, but afterwards he honourably erased Baxter's name and put his own name instead. Many of the plates were never used by him at all, and few never came into his possession." (George Baxter, junior, retained a few of the plates, and started as a colour-printer in Birmingham, but he did not succeed.) "As a licensee Le Blond had engraved many plates and blocks from his own subjects, and continued issuing prints till the wretched German lithographs came over.

"About 1888 I called on Mr. Le Blond, and asked him to sell me Baxter's plates, and blocks. He agreed to do so on certain conditions. I could have all his Baxter plates, blocks, and prints for £400, but I must purchase his own (Le Blond) plates and blocks, and half the stock of prints for £500. This I agreed to do, and said I wished to take away at once all the plates. He said, 'I don't think you can, I'll show you what and where they are!'

"He went to a cupboard by the side of a fireplace, and when he opened it I could hardly see the contents for soot and dirt. There were the plates, all piled up on end, which had not seen daylight for many a year. In all, there were three or four van-loads of blocks and prints sent me, the prints numbering about 100,000. I also purchased from Le Blond, just before his death, several oil-paintings from which he had copied his pictures.

"When I came to compare the lists of plates and subjects, I found some of the plates were missing, and I traced that the plate of the 'Dogs of St. Bernard' had been sold and taken to America. Also the plates of the 'First Parliament' and the 'Coronation.'" (N.B.—These plates, respectively 24 ins. by 18 ins., and 21 ins. by 17 ins., were about the largest and finest Baxter executed. The "Opening of the First Parliament" is catalogued at £5 in sepia, and £15 in colours; the "Coronation" at the same prices: the "St. Bernard Dogs" at £5 5s.).

"Hearing that one of Baxter's workmen was still in the land

of the living, I wrote to him to come down and see me, which he did.

**Baxter's
Personality, Colours,
and Papers.**

He told me that Baxter was a very eccentric, hot-tempered man, often destroying plates and prints if they did not satisfy him at the moment. Every single print had to pass under his notice before being issued. He ground and mixed his own colours; they were viscous and thickish, like printer's ink, and his choice of paper depended mainly on the subject, and the number of blocks to be used. The workman (who afterwards was employed by Le Blond) mixed and sent me some of the colours used by Le Blond, but their difference from those which must have been used by Baxter I noticed at a glance. I believe that Baxter's 'secret' lay in his mixing of colours and his choice of paper. You notice how different Baxter's paper is from the smooth, thin stuff used by Le Blond. Baxter often printed on a thick, spongy paper, which would absorb. Le Blond couldn't do that. I saw by the 'trial' prints that Baxter's experiments were made on soft, hard, glazed, tinted, and other papers.

"I am much afraid that no written or printed instructions or directions were ever handed to the licensees. The licensees were all printers and publishers already, and perhaps they thought they knew enough about the process themselves. I know for a fact that Le Blond never used the same number of blocks that Baxter did if he thought that fewer would do, and he very seldom used them in the same order. This, with not using the same paper, would make all the difference in finish and softness.

**The "Instructions"
and the Process.**

"It must not be forgotten that Baxter was an artist in every sense of the word. In producing the plates of the 'First Parliament' and the 'Queen's Coronation,' he had many sittings from those whose portraits appeared in the prints. He constantly altered his plates. His colours must have been something like artist's tube colours in substance. He did not let his workpeople mix them. What Baxter patented and licensed to others was the right to 'build up' prints by the use of many blocks. He used his blocks one after the other, much as an artist would use brushes and colours. Some of the blocks had the surface much cut away. For his large prints he had to join pieces of box-wood, to make a block big enough. Le Blond was no artist himself, and he did not take trouble enough.

"Baxter put his best prints on stamped mounts. The best prints have a glaze, and they should not and need not be varnished.

"From some of the plates, which were dispersed in 1896, some prints in black or purple have been taken, but nobody now can give the colours and the texture of a Baxter print, or even a faint imitation of them. They are unique, and will be for ever."

Then this dear old connoisseur, who was before his time, unfortunately for him, and whose collection is long gone to the four winds, bowed himself out of my room, not unthanked.

A BAXTER BOOK CATALOGUE.

George Baxter was more than a wood-engraver and colour-printer; he was an artist and illustrator. The books he illustrated

are sought after, but few collectors possess a complete list of the books for which to search. Often the illustrations are quite exquisite, and the temptation is to detach them and frame or portfolio them. But that should not be done; the books should be treasured intact. Baxter books make quite a "line" for a collector in themselves.

Here, therefore, is a detailed catalogue, as complete as I at present can make it, for the most part chronologically arranged:—

**A Baxter-Book
Catalogue.**

1. "The Feathered Tribes of the British Islands," by R. Mudie, two vols. (published by Whittaker, 1834); oil-prints, "Dipper and Nest," "Golden Eagle," "Little Grebe and Nest," "The Gannet."
2. "Natural History of British Birds," by R. Mudie (Orr & Smith, 1834); oil-print, "Eagle and Vulture," and several engravings of birds.
3. "The Air," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1835); oil-prints, "Airbird" and "Mountain Tops."
4. "The Sea," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1835); oil-prints, "The Shore" and "Evening on the Sea."
5. "The Artist," by B. F. Gandee (Chapman & Hall, 1835); oil-prints, "Circlet of Flowers" and "Cattle Drinking."
6. "Fisher's Drawing-Room Scrap-Book" (1835); oil-print, "Hindoo and Mahomedan Buildings."
7. "The Earth," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1835); oil-prints, "Temperature" and "Tropical Scenery."
8. "Peter Parley's Annual" (Darton, 1835); oil-print, "Modifications of the Clouds."
9. "The Perennial: Moral and Religious Poetry" (Darton & Co., 1835); oil-print, "The End of Time."
10. "Sketches of Germany and the Germans" (Whittaker, 1836), two vols.; oil-prints, "Bohemian Peasants" and "Hungarian Peasants."
11. "Baxter's Agricultural and Horticultural Gleaner" (Simpkin & Marshall, 1836); oil-prints, "Convolvulus" and "Group of Shells."
12. "The Heavens," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1836); oil-prints, "The Seasons" and "The Polar Sky."
13. "The Garland of Love" (verses), (Chapman & Hall, 1836); oil-print, "Lovers Standing Under a Tree."
14. "Vah-ta-ah, the Feejean Princess" (Wesleyan Missionary Society, 1837); oil-print, "Vah-ta-ah."
15. "Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands," by J. Williams (Snow, 1837). In some copies, oil-print, "John Williams"; in others, oil-print, "Te Po, a Chief." Editions also in 1838 and 1839; oil-print, "Te Po."
16. "The New Year Token" (Darton, 1836); oil-print, "Virginia Water," and vignette.
17. "Pictorial Album, or Cabinet of Paintings" (Chapman & Hall, 1837); oil-prints, "Cape Wilberforce," "Carrier Pigeon," "Verona," "Cleopatra," "Lugano," "Interior of the Lady Chapel at Warwick," "Boa Ghaut," "Zenobia," "Jeannie Deans," "Destruction of Sodom," "Burns and his Highland Mary."
18. "Summer," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1837); oil-prints, "Summer Fly" and "Isola Bella."

19. "Spring," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1837); oil-prints, "Bird of Spring" and "Turn of the Monsoon."

20. "Autumn," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1837); oil-prints, "Autumnal Artist" and "Vineyard near Mount St. Bernard."

21. "Winter," by R. Mudie (Ward, 1837); oil-prints, "Winter Bird" and "Avalanche at Lewes."

22. "Advice on the Teeth," by E. Saunders (Chapman & Hall, 1837); oil-print (with uplifting slip) showing jaw and teeth.

23. "The Greenhouse and Flower Garden," by McIntosh (Orr, 1838); oil-prints, four of flowers.

24. "The Missionary; or, Christian New Year's Gift" (1838); vignette.

25. "China: its State and Prospects," by W. A. Medhurst (Snow, 1838); oil-print, "Mr. Medhurst in Conversation with Choo-tih-Lang."

26. "Melaia, and other Poems," by Eliza Cook (1838); oil-prints, "Old Water Mill" and "Moonlit Seascape."

27. "Physical Man," by R. Mudie (Orr, 1838); oil-prints, "Dying Gladiator" and "Milo of Crotona."

28. "Tales of the Great and Brave"; frontispiece (1838).

29. "Social Man," by R. Mudie (Orr, 1839); oil-prints, "Child in a Bed" and "Husband, Wife, and Children."

30. "Intellectual Man," by R. Mudie (Orr, 1839); oil-prints, "The Studio" and "Moses."

31. "Moral Man," by R. Mudie (Orr, 1839); oil-prints, "Socrates" and "Judgment of Brutus."

32. "A Narrative of Greek Missions," by S. R. Wilson (Snow, 1839); oil-print, "A Greek Monastery."

33. "British India in Relation to the Decline of Hindooism and the Progress of Christianity," by W. Campbell (Snow, 1839); oil-print, "View of the Mission House, Bangalore."

34. "Maritime Discovery and Christian Missions," by J. Campbell (Snow, 1840); oil-prints, "Captured Female Missionaries Disembarking at Monte Video" and "Landing of Columbus."

35. "Persecutions of the Christians at Madagascar" (Snow, 1840); oil-prints, "Six Malagasy Christians."

36. "Shells and their Inmates" (Religious Tract Society, 1841); oil-print, "A Group of Shells."

37. "History of the Order of Knighthood," by Sir N. H. Nicholas, 1841; oil-prints, "Queen Victoria Standing in a Garter Stall," and twenty illustrations of the various Orders.

38. "Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa," by R. Moffatt (Snow, 1842); oil-print, "The Mission at the Kuruman Station."

39. "The Martyrs of Erromango," by J. Campbell (Snow, 1842); oil-print, "Rev. J. Williams' First Interview with the Natives of Erromango."

40. "Astronomy and Scripture," by J. Milner (Snow, 1843); oil-print, "Parhelion."

41. "Sights in all Seasons" (Religious Tract Society, 1844); oil-print, "Gathering of Apples."

42. "Richmond and other Poems," by Charles Ellis (Madden and Malcolm, 1845); oil-print, "Richmond Hill."

43. "Transactions of the British and Foreign Institute (1845); oil-print, "Plan of a Proposed Communist Settlement."

44. "Child's Companion" (Religious Tract Society, 1846); oil-print, "Zoological Gardens."

45. Ditto (1847); oil-print, "Her Majesty's Marine Residence, Isle of Wight."

46. "Social Tales," by Mrs. Sherwood (1847); oil-print, "The Welsh Harper."

47. "Northern Antiquities" (Bohn, 1847); oil-print, "Yggdrasil."

48. "Child's Companion" (Religious Tract Society, 1848); oil-print, "London from Greenwich Observatory."

49. "Wesleyan Juvenile Offering" (1848); oil-print, "View of Chapel, Madras."

50. "Child's Companion" (1849); oil-print, "Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives."

51. "The Christian Commonwealth (1849); oil-print, "View of Self-Supporting Institution."

52. "Child's Companion" (1850); oil-print, "Windsor Castle from Long Walk."

53. "Female Agency among the Heathen" (1850); folding plate.

54. "Humboldt's Views" (Bohn, 1850); oil-print, "Chimborazo."

55. "Child's Companion" (Religious Tract Society, 1851); oil-print, "Bethlehem."

56. "Peter Parley's Annual" (Darton, 1856); oil-prints, "Man, Boy, and Three Women in Boat," and "Boy with Monkey."

57. "Loitering Among the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland"; oil-print, "Derwentwater."

58. "Tales for Boys," by M. Elliott (Darton); oil-print, "Boy and a Pond."

59. "Caroline Mordaunt," by Mrs. Sherwood; frontispiece.

60. "England's Queen and Prince Albert," by H. C. Wilson; oil-prints of "Queen Victoria" and "Prince Albert."

61. "The Looking Glass for the Mint" (1840).

N.B.—Since this list has been in the press, one much more complete has appeared in "*George Baxter*" (Sampson Low), by C. T. Courtney Lewis, the best book—indeed, the only book—on the work of Baxter.

Baxter also produced about twenty-four of the "Suttaby Pocket-Books." These were pocket diaries, which began to be published about the year 1820, and were continued down to Baxter's period. In the issue for the year 1850, for instance, the frontispiece is a fine design in aquatint printed in pale purple, and it reads as follows: "Le Souvenir; or, Pocket Tablet for 1850, with illustrations in oil-colours by G. Baxter, Patentee. London, R. and H. Suttaby and J. Toulmin." The oil-prints were "Broughton Hall and Castle," "Bala Lake," "Water Mill on the River Wye, in Derbyshire," "The Toilet; or, Shall I Succeed," and "Tintern Abbey."

Prints on Music. I mention a few prints which were used to illustrate musical works; for a longer list see Mr. Courtney Lewis's book on Baxter.

"Holy Family and Nativity," frontispiece to sheet music, "The Adoration."

"Paul and Virginia," frontispiece to the "Paul and Virginia Waltz."

"Edward VII." (age seventeen), frontispiece to the "Prince of Wales' Galop."

"Jenny Lind" and "Jetty Treffz," "Jullien's Musical Album, 1837."

"News to and from Home," frontispiece to song, "Good News from Home."

"Her Majesty at Cove," frontispiece to the "Hibernian Quadrilles."

"The Bride," frontispiece to "The Prima Donna Waltz."

I daresay that a good many copies of such oil-prints are lying undiscovered yet in old bound volumes of the music our mothers used to play, on upright pianos with green silk fronts, fifty years ago; when discovered, they should not be detached completely; the whole frontispiece, the print and the gilt band, with the ornamental lithography surrounding them, should be mounted and preserved. Hundreds of thousands of these were produced, but often they are inferior to the prints which were published on cards from the same blocks.

LICENSEE OIL-PRINTS.

Recently I bought an old scrap-book for eighteenpence. It contained 106 oil-prints by J. M. Kronheim & Co., who were Baxter's licensees. Over a hundred oil-prints for eighteenpence! That was the rate at which Baxter prints themselves could be bought twenty-five years ago. A hint to collectors to-day.

The price of Baxter prints has risen so seriously and is still so much on the increase that "faking" has begun. Not that it is possible absolutely to forge a Baxter print;

"Faked" Baxters. that is out of the question. But there are several dodges to which ingenious people who sell to dealers can have recourse. For example, the other day I was offered a "Descent from the Cross," framed and glazed, for 12s. 6d. This is supposed to be Baxter's *chef d'œuvre*; it is commonly catalogued at 30s. I examined the twelve-and-sixpenny article with a lens, and I found that somebody had used a proof print in monochrome (which can be purchased for 10s.), and painted it up in water-colours to match and imitate the real oil-print. Again, out of 212 items in Mr. Bullock's "Baxter" Catalogue, fifty-three are asterisked, which means that oil-prints were taken from the same plates by Le Blond, one of the licensees. It is quite practicable, therefore, to cut the eighth of an inch off the bottom of such a Le Blond print, just where Le Blond's name appeared, remount the print, and offer it for sale as a Baxter.

Usually when the last-mentioned dodge has been used the print becomes too small, and that is a warning to a Baxter collector. But even that is not an infallible guide, because real "Baxters" have been trimmed and remounted. I recently bought, on purpose to write about them, two licensee prints which

actually bore the name of Baxter. In the one case, Baxter's name was on the print itself, but one-third of an inch had been cut from the bottom edge, removing the name of Le Blond or some other licensee. I could tell by the general appearance, low colour, lack of brilliance, &c., that it was not a Baxter; the picture is "News from Australia." In the other case ("Little Red Riding Hood") Baxter's name was still on the margin, and "Le Blond & Co., London, L. A. Elliott & Co., Boston, U.S.A.," had been printed on the picture. Elliott & Co. appear to have been agents and vendors for Le Blond on the other side of the Atlantic. In this case, again, the picture showed inferiority to Baxter's own work. Then, further, there were, about 1860-1870, not a few chromo-lithographic imitations made. And the Germans issued a quantity of bad forgeries in that way.

The point I wish to make is that if it is now worth while to "fake" Baxters, which twenty years ago could be bought for a

**Pick Up
Licensee Prints.**

shilling or so apiece the larger prints, and ten shillings a hundred the smaller, may it not be well worth while to buy licensee prints now cheaply while one can? So let me give some information, lists, and indications concerning the work of oil-printers licensed to imitate the style of George Baxter. I look at my hundred and six "Kronheims" for eighteenpence, and consider them worth much more than three-fourths of a farthing each in themselves, apart from the fact that they are representative of a dead art, and cannot be reproduced or successfully imitated. Had they been Le Blond prints they would have cost me, taking the bigger with the smaller, a hundred and six shillings at least. Yet they are, to my thinking, better prints than Le Blond did. At present you can buy Le Blond prints on their original mounts within embossed ovals for 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. each, and they are certain to appreciate, particularly those of them that can be "faked" to be sold as Baxters. In the same way the prints of the other licensees will advance in value, and I daresay my Kronheims that cost me eighteenpence will be worth £5 some day. Meantime they are delightful bits of work to own, and to look at now and again.

The following is probably a not quite complete list of the printing firms who were licensed to use the Baxter process:

The Licensees. Bradshaw and Blacklock, Vincent Brookes, Abraham Le Blond, Kronheim & Co., Mansell, Myers, Grant, Dickes, Leighton, Capone.

It is said that there were "one or two Continental firms" also, but I am not sure about that. Messrs. Kronheim seem to have done work for the French market—some of my Kronheims show the title in a kind of French—a very defective French—and perhaps that has misled.

I possess a copy of the catalogue of the "Baxter Exhibition," which was held in the Masonic Hall, Birmingham, in December, 1894. It gives lists of ninety-nine prints by Le Blond, and 132 by Mansell, and it mentions three by Leighton, two by Bradshaw and Blacklock, six by Dickes, and only one by Kronheim. Yet Kronheim published thousands of different prints. As to Vincent Brookes, nobody has ever seen a print bearing his name, I believe; probably

a good many prints which bear Baxter's name were issued by Brookes, who was the first buyer of Baxter's plates and blocks. Grant and Capone, if they did much work, have never had it catalogued at all. So here is a fine field for somebody in the way of collecting and research.

I copy here the titles of Le Blond's prints, mentioned in the Birmingham Exhibition catalogue to which I have referred.

The Wedding Day, Learning to Ride, The Sailor's Departure, The Image Boy, The Fisherman's Hut, Please Remember the

**List of Le Blond's
Prints.**

Grotto, Snowballing, Grandmother's Snuffbox, The Young Angler, Moonlight, The Birds-nest, The Gleaners, The Leisure Hour, Sunday Morning, Good News, The Pedlar, The Soldier's Return, The Burning Glass, Blowing Bubbles, Waiting at the Ferry, Pet Rabbits, The Showman, The Cherry Seller, Grandfather's Pipe, The Dancing Dogs, The Blackberry Gatherers, The Millstream, Mayday, Guy Fawkes, International Exhibition, 1862; Crystal Palace, 1851; Brighton, Ramsgate, Needlebox Subjects, Paul at Athens, Scene at Windsor Castle, Elymas, Ananias, Miraculous Draught of Fishes, Christ's Charge to Peter, Beautiful Gate of the Temple, Sacrificing the Bullock, Queen in State Robes; Queen, Prince Consort, and Prince of Wales at Osborne; Girl with Tambourine, Royal Family at Osborne, Royal Family at Windsor, Royal Family in Scotland, Queen in State Carriage at Westminster, New Houses of Parliament, Prince Consort on Horseback, Girl Gathering Flowers, Contemplation, Queen and Prince Albert at Balmoral, Girl in Bulrushes, Girl Holding Branch of Tree, Girl Holding Bulrushes, Constancy, Nymph Flying over Water, Actæon and Diana, Tyrolean Waltz, Girl at the Bath, Girl and Butterflies, Coblenz, Bingen, Windsor Castle, Ayr, Britannia Tubular Bridge, Derwent Water, Londonderry, Heidelberg, New York Bay, Figure with Harp, Girl in Shell Boat, Venice, Brothers Water, Her Majesty Leaving Portsmouth Harbour, Chamouni, The Sisters, The Departure, Courtship, Girl Standing in the Bath, Persian Dancing Girl, Rheinfels, Cavalier Playing Guitar to a Lady, Lugano, Girl in Cornfield, Heather, Forget-me-nots, North of Scotland, Virginia Water, On the Watch, Highland Lake, Galway Peasants, Moorish Bride.

The firm of Kronheim and Co, is still in existence, though they do not issue oil-prints now. They have written me to contest courteously the statement that none of the licensees approached the excellence of the work done by Baxter himself, and they have sent me two fine large old oil-prints by their firm.

Relative Merits.

The one of "The Wine Tasters," 15 ins. by 12 ins., shows by the "proof" of colours on its margin that fourteen different plates were used on it. The other, "The Village Schoolmaster," 14½ ins. by 11½ ins., was colour-printed by twelve plates. Kronheim prints were produced from a series of *metal* plates, not wood blocks. Messrs. Kronheim tell me they have searched in vain for the "Printed Instructions" supposed to have been issued by Baxter to his licensees. The connoisseur who in his day was the greatest of Baxter collectors told me that he did not believe such "Printed Instructions" were ever issued.

Le Blond appears to have been the most prolific of the licensees, but Le Blond prints are usually defective in brilliancy of colour, and sometimes they did not "register" accurately. Baxter's son was employed by Vincent Brookes, and the original plates were used. Then the plates passed into the possession of Le Blond. Mr. C. F. Bullock, of John Bright Street, Birmingham, the principal dealer in Baxters, writes that "Le Blond was undoubtedly a fine colour-printer, many of his works possessing true artistic merit, and probably more nearly approaching Baxter than any other man. In fact, it is only by comparing the work he did from Baxter's plates with the originals that we are able to see how far he fell short of the ideal."

Baxter made a competency, but Le Blond, after placing many prints on the market, had to give up the venture. The blocks, plates, and unsold prints remained upon his shelves for twenty years. Then a collector purchased them. He in his turn had to sell, and, sitting behind a screen in an auction-room, he had the pain of hearing his collection "sell for a song," bundles of a hundred prints going off under the hammer for a shilling or two.

SECTION IV.

RARIORA.

D ID you ever hear of the true tale of the passionate young man who had a fancy for collecting the eggs of the Great Auk? A wonderful trade is driven in rare eggs, and Great Auk eggs are the scarcest of all. The Great Auk—(*alca impennis* or *gair-fowl*), a ridiculous bird three feet long that had hardly any wings—used to be plentiful in northern latitudes, and to visit British shores. But the breed is now extinct, and only some eighty eggs are known to be in existence, all addled or blown, of course; they sell at anything from £200 each up to 300 guineas. The passionate young man in question had collected thirteen auk eggs, and had come to the end of his financial tether, when he heard of a young lady who possessed eight auk eggs which had been bequeathed to her by her father. With the true instinct of a collector, he proposed marriage to her, but she declined him, and in a rage he sold his own collection off. It is never wise to mix your affections up with your collections. He lost about £500 on that transaction. Auk eggs ought only to be auctioned one at a time, and at intervals. But all "natural history" and ethnographic curios are on the down grade, by the by.

Genuine sets of old Apostle spoons are rare. There are thirteen in a set. In 1901 a set was sold for £1,060. Heaven knows what

the set would fetch which is preserved at
Apostle Spoons. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, for they are date-marked 1566, while the spoons that sold

for £1,060 were made in the year 1617 only. Everybody will have seen Apostle spoons, if only modern specimens, but everybody does not know how to distinguish one little Apostle at the end of a handle from another. Here is a list of the emblems which distinguish the Twelve: St. Thomas, with a spear; St. Matthias, with a battle-axe or halberd; St. Bartholomew, with a butcher's knife; St. Jude, with a cross; St. Philip, with a long staff; St. Paul, with a sword; St. Peter, with a key; St. James the Greater, with a pilgrim's staff; St. James the Less, with a fuller's bat; St. John, with a cup and a hand raised; St. Matthew, with a wallet. The twelfth, without emblem, stands for St. Andrew or St. Simon Zelotes. The thirteenth, the Saviour or "Master," is figured with an orb and a cross, with a hand raised in blessing. A horizontal nimbus surrounding the head, if it still remains, gives greater value to an Apostle spoon.

A poor first edition copy of "Paradise Lost" has been sold for one hundred guineas, which was twenty-one times as much as Milton

received from the publisher for the manuscript
Books. of the book. The poet's receipt for that £5 has sold for £45. The manuscript of Book I. of

"Paradise Lost" cost Mr. Pierpont Morgan nearly £3,000 when he

acquired it. In one case a first edition copy of the book fetched £355; the first purchaser of it, in 1667, would get it for three shillings.

Nathaniel Pinder published "The Pilgrim's Progress" at "The Sign of the Peacock," in the Poultry, in 1678. The price then was eighteenpence a copy. Only five such copies are known to exist, and one of them has sold for £1,475—about £250 per ounce, which is far costlier than the oldest and rarest old silver plate. It went to America.

In 1489 Caxton printed at Westminster his "Ryall Book," or translation of the "*Livre pour un Roi*," which had been written in 1279 for King Philip of France. The selling price of Caxton's volume at the time of its publication is not now known, and only five copies of it are believed to remain in existence. Four of these are in public libraries, so that the copy sold in 1901 is the only copy available for collecting. It fetched £1,550 under the hammer.

The Kilmarnock first edition of Burns' Poems has fetched £700.

Clothing or objects connected with historical personages or events are rare and sometimes sell for large prices. The pens with which the Treaty of Amiens was signed

Historical Relics. sold for £400. Sterne's wig has fetched £200.

For one of Sir Isaac Newton's teeth as much as £620 has been obtained, while (strangely enough) one of Napoleon the Great's only realised £7 10s. It is said that 4,000 francs were offered for the teeth of Héloïse when her body was exhumed in Paris. The skull of Mozart was exhumed in 1801, and is valued at £100. The signature of Richard Duke of York, father of Edward IV. and Richard Crookback, has sold for 80 guineas, and a document signed by Edward VI. and Archbishop Cranmer has fetched as much as £450. A letter written by Robert Burns has sold for £390, while the manuscript of his "To Mary in Heaven" did not realise more than £152. Nelson relics in particular excite great interest and sell for high prices; his last letter to Lady Hamilton brought £1,035 under the hammer in 1904, and his "General Memorandum" for the Battle of Trafalgar was sold in 1906 for £3,600.

There are hundreds of known cases in which rariora have been acquired by "people who knew" at prices ridiculously small, compared with the real collecting and commercial value of the object. Do not give heed to people who tell you that "all the bargains have been

Still Chances. picked up long ago." The flux and change of circumstances, human liability to error, forgetfulness, over-much secrecy on the part of a collector and his sudden death, the accidents of an auction, the selling off of things in quiet and unadvertised sales, together with many other conditions, produce still, and will always produce, chances to acquire rariora "for a song."

OLD MINIATURES.

In a fine old miniature the face, neck, arms, and hands are either so delicately stippled that not a single stroke of the brush can be detected, even under a magnifying glass, or so broadly painted as to be as artistic as a Romney. The flesh colour is

brilliant and luminous. The fingers are finely drawn and modelled. The hair-painting is often so finished and delicate that you seem to be able to count what Hamlet called "each particular hair." The eyes are clear, steady, and life-like. The lace of the costume *looks* lacey, the fur furry, the silk silken. The background is stippled in with soft tints that suit the complexion and the colour of the hair. The back of the thin disc of ivory, taken out of the frame, has a slightly greenish hue, which rather suggests the mould on cheese. The back of the whole is the colour of dark old leather, and has a wrinkled surface—it is the gold-beater's skin which was wrapped and folded round the ivory and the glass to keep out damp and air. Miniatures on vellum are early and rather rare. Sometimes you may find a good miniature painted on old cardboard. Miniatures of pretty women sell better than miniatures of men, even when painted by the same artist.

The best and most saleable miniatures all have their pedigrees. Most of them were painted as portraits, and descended in the families, until some financial catastrophe and

The Pedigrees. consequent sale took place. Then the sale-records continue the pedigree. Often the name of the original (the sitter for the portrait), is written on a slip of old paper, which lies between the back of the ivory and the card that, covered with gold-beater's skin, is at the back of all. In many cases, perhaps in most, but certainly not in anything like three-quarters of the cases, the name or the initials of the artist appear, either on the edge of the front of the ivory, or somewhere in the careful wrappings at the back; sometimes the date accompanies it (the year only). Many miniatures are labelled with these particulars in old-fashioned writing and faded ink, on time-yellowed or age-stained paper at the back.

It is miniatures of this class which fetch the long prices, the hundreds of pounds, at famous auction sales. In July, 1902, "a

Prices—Various. portrait of a lady of the time of Elizabeth, in a richly-jewelled black-and-white dress and a large lace ruff, on a blue background, painted in 1597 by Nicholas Hilliard on a playing card," fetched £640. On the other hand, I bought the other day a miniature in oils on copper, painted not half a century later than that one, a portrait of Cardinal Richelieu, for three shillings and sixpence. This is one of a good many old miniatures which have been taken out of their frames for the sake of selling or melting down and de-jewelling the precious old frames of gold set with pearls, sapphires, or diamonds. The dismantled miniature lies about, gets covered with dust, becomes lost or forgotten, lies *perdu*, and then comes to light in a little dealer's miscellaneous tray, to be recognised and snapped up by the connoisseur who first sees it. Such is, in fact, the *rationale* of a good many cheap "finds." It is wise to buy an old miniature frame when you come across it empty, though old miniatures were never made of a regulation size.

Let me tell the story of another bargain. A dealer was having his "annual clearance sale." In a sixpenny-ha'penny imitation-morocco photograph-frame there lay on a table a French miniature, of date about 1820; the frame was rather new, and the miniature was loose under the glass, so the dealer thought it was worthless or

modern. "How much?" "Oh—three-and-sixpence!" Removing the frame, the purchaser found under the oval of ivory the ormolu rim that had once been fitted to it. The picture is an exquisite portrait of a beautiful girl with a cat.

A connoisseur went into a small dealer's shop and asked the prices of three miniatures which lay in a row in the window. "Four pound, this one; that one, two pound ten." "And the other?" the connoisseur asked. "Oh, that's nothing; you can have that for seven-and-sixpence!" Yet it was by far the best of the three, a portrait of George the Fourth's wife, signed by Pasquier. An admirable miniature of Mrs. Fry the philanthropist, which had been taken out of its frame, cost one-and-sixpence.

There are thousands of fraudulent imitations and modern copies of old miniatures about. Cosway and Plimer are the artists

Forgeries

most imitated. Often they are painted on cardboard, not ivory; ivory is rather dear. You will find that "each particular hair" is *not* separately painted. The colour has been laid on in a wash, and then, while the paint was still wet, a blunt point, like the end of a hairpin, has been used to scratch away some of the paint, just as decorators use combs for that horribly inartistic process they call "graining." If the material *is* ivory, the back of it is too white to be old. The lace is put on in blobs of Chinese white, the shadows and sometimes the outlines are put in with Indian ink, and the colours are inharmonious or garish. In very good imitations the suitable flesh-tint is sometimes got by fixing a piece of copper-foil at the back of the thin ivory, just where the face and neck occur in front of it; the hue of copper-foil shows faintly through. And missing from all the modern miniatures, whether honest or fraudulent copies, is that soft and vaporous look, almost a patina, almost a film, which comes with time only.

It is quite the fashion to collect miniatures. Queen Victoria made it the fashion fifty years ago. I think it will go on being the fashion, if "fashion" is not too ephemeral a term to apply to a pursuit which lasts so long. The best place in England to study old miniatures is in the Jones Bequest collection at South Kensington. Old French and Cooper miniatures are best studied at Hertford House, Manchester Square, in the peerless Wallace collection. The great names among English miniature painters are those of Oliver—a miniature signed "I. O." (Isaac Oliver) has sold for £694—Cooper, Flatman, Hilliard, Humphrey, Cosway, Plimer, Engleheart, Stuart, Shelley, and Ross. Samuel Shelley died in 1809; Ross was a little later; Ross was the last of the great school. All miniatures are not portraits. Samuel Shelley used to paint dozens of subject-miniatures, allegories, and so forth. These were exhibited at the Old Water Colour Society's Shows, and not many of them sold. Let me repeat that most miniatures were painted to order, as portraits. Subject and allegorical miniatures are, however, quite valuable to-day.

After a little study you may come to recognise a miniaturist's work by his style. The great feature about Engleheart's miniatures is their absolute downright portraiture. Cosway flattered; all

his fair sitters he made too fair and impossibly beautiful. In

The Styles. Plimer's velvety work the subjects resemble each other too much; their eyes, noses, and monotonous white costumes are all the same.

Cosway's work shows sparkle, brilliancy, and charm, graceful line, light touch, and transparency of colour in the highest degree. Shelley grouped two or three heads in one miniature with a particular skill. Smart's work seems particularly unobtrusive, but the faces are strikingly modelled, and the complexions look like the colour and bloom of a peach. Perhaps the master-worker of all was Samuel Cooper. The portraits of men he painted seem almost to breathe and speak, his colouring has the depth and fulness of oils. About Cosway's ladies there is a particular airiness and fluffiness of the hair. The hair which Shelley painted looks like that also, but the complexions are more florid. Sir William Ross gave rich colour and complexion, the costume is more modern in his work, and he preferred larger pictures, often oblong.

It is still possible to get together a collection of old miniatures for a moderate sum. But the possibility is ceasing to be a probability. In this as in every other "line" collectors who are not rich must make hay while the sun shines, to-day.

OLD WATER-COLOUR DRAWINGS.

This is a good time for collecting water-colour drawings of the Early English school, and a delightful hobby it is. At present the leading dealers, who from time to time decree what is to be the fashion in collecting, are rather leaving water-colour drawings and sketches alone. So that prices are reasonable, even for thin purses, though really fine and finished English water-colours of the period 1760 to 1850 must be paid for in scores or hundreds of guineas, as a rule.

But that need not daunt the collector with scores of shillings only. Delightful "bits" of water-colour are still to be had for the finding, at prices amazingly low. This is almost as cheap a hobby as print-collecting, and each piece is individual, direct from the brush, and original, as prints are not. Few forgeries in this line need be feared, and it is astonishing what may still be "picked up for a song." For example:—

A little David Roberts gem ($4\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$) for 5s. A signed John Varley sketch ($4\frac{1}{2}$ by 4) for 5s. A finer S. Owen sea-piece than "South Kensington" can boast, signed (6 by $4\frac{1}{2}$), for 10s. 6d. A characteristic signed Payne ($6\frac{1}{2}$ by 5) for 12s. A signed and dated Clarkson Stanfield, View on the Mersey (14 by 7), for £1 5s. A magnificent early John Varley (13 by 10) for £2.

And again, a signed J. Webb seascape ($7\frac{1}{2}$ by 6) for 1s. 6d. A Clarkson Stanfield shipwreck in sepia ($5\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$) for 2s. 6d. A Muller view of Whitby Harbour ($4\frac{1}{2}$ by 3) for 5s. A Chambers sea-piece (11 by 8) for 7s. 6d. A fine signed Stubbs interior (11 by 7) for 2s. 6d. A splendid signed Wageman portrait (14 by 11) for 4s. 6d. All these are by renowned or well-known artists of the Early English water-colour school.

The forgotten portfolio at the miscellaneous dealer's, routed out for you if you are very sweetly persistent, the stuffed drawer at the small second-hand bookseller's, and the dark wall of the little broker's shop in the back street, are the places where such bargains as those are to be found. But to find them requires a remembering eye and a knowledge of the early water-colour styles. Often the pictures are half-disguised, in dingy mounts with tarnished gilt edges, and in dusty frames; but cleaned with breadcrumb, remounted, and simply framed, they delight the eye and give refinement to one's walls at a cost absurdly small. And their "style" is a lost art; no such pictures are being painted to-day, their art value will always be recognised, and their selling value will appreciate.

Visit the galleries at "South Kensington" where in abundant array the glories of the Early English water-colour school are displayed. Spend an hour now and then over

**Where to Study
in Order to
Know Them.**

one painter's work, in the Print Room at the British Museum, where courteous and intelligent personal guidance awaits you. That is the way to know the style of the "school" by the eye, so as to recognise other examples of it when you happen on them, in the forgotten portfolio and the little broker's shop. I never re-visit the South Kensington collection without enthusiastically declaring to myself again that the English water-colours painted from 1790 to 1850 are, on the whole, the finest things ever done in pictorial art. An oil-painting, thick, greasy, re-touched, impasto upon impasto, is something ugly and clumsy compared with those few washes and veils of impalpable transparent pure colour cast upon paper, which, at a stroke, and impossible of re-touching, convey all the magic of light and colour and all the emotion of natural beauty to the understanding eye. English water-colours of that period were the most adequate expressions of English qualities in art ever uttered. And Sandby, Hearne, Dayes, Cozens, Girtin—Turner, of course—Cotman, Prout, David Cox, De Wint, Copley Fielding, Varley, Robson, Barrett, Stanfield (and one or two others later, such as Marny), are really greater names in art than those of half the oil-painters whom convention has glorified.

In that delightful illustrated book, "David Cox and Peter de Wint" (published by Sampson Low at 3s. 6d.), there are dated lists

**The Chances of
"Finds."**

of the pictures shown by Cox and De Wint at the Exhibitions of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours from 1813 to 1859. There were hundreds of them, and many of them have not yet been traced in their subsequent history and identified. These are still "incog.," and waiting to be a collector's pride and joy. Then there are thousands of sketches and "bits" which "went loose" at the death of artists of this school. Further, men like Cox and Varley practised as drawing-masters for many years, and their method was rapidly to paint a small picture before the eyes of each pupil. These uncared-for specimens often remain unidentified and "knocking about" to-day. A few years ago a student went into a small second-hand bookshop and carried away seventeen Turner sketches for about ninepence each. And it is not sketches and unfinished "bits" alone that may be found.

GRANDFATHER CLOCKS.

Not only collectors, but people who are not collectors, like to own, or wish to own, a grandfather clock. Some people like to own a good many. In 1902 a collection of over forty of the finest and earliest ever made was dispersed. In 1904 about eighty were sold from another collection.

These wholesale dispersals have rather weakened the market. To-day one can buy an old "grandfather" clock for anything between thirty shillings and sixty pounds. But the thirty-shilling clocks are only thirty-hour clocks; they need winding once a day, which is a nuisance. The desirable "grandfather" clocks are the eight-day clocks, which only need winding once a week.

You can buy a really good old eight-day "grandfather" in an oak case for £6. If you want a fine walnut-cased clock, or an inlaid oak or mahogany-cased clock, you will have to pay much more than £6. But a clock cased in lacquered and gilt wood (imitation Oriental lacquer) can be had for £7, though this kind of case seldom suits well with one's furniture. For a "Chippendale" or "Sheraton" clock you may have to pay up to £16 or more. A fine old marquetry-cased clock, of "Adam" period and style, or earlier, may cost you up to £40. These, so far, may be clocks which strike the hours only on a bell or domal gong.

If you want a clock which strikes the half and quarter hours (a chiming clock which plays the Westminster or Cambridge chimes) you will hardly get one for less than £20, and even then only one in a rather plain case. If you want a really gorgeous clock, a hundred and fifty years old, metal face, chimes, inlaid "Queen Anne" or "Sheraton" case, you may have to pay £60 for it.

"Grandfathers," as the dealers call them, are made nowadays new, but not at prices so low as £6 or £7. In fact, an old case alone often cost more to make than the clock as a whole is sold for to-day. You have, therefore, little reason to fear being fobbed off with a forgery. Sometimes, it is true, the case is "faked," and often the works and face of one clock are set up in the case of another. But generally a "grandfather" sold as an antique is in the main what it purports to be.

It is unwise to buy a clock which is not already in going order, and actually going; or a clock with a very dilapidated "bonnet" or case. The apparently cheap price of a clock in such a condition will be illusory; you will have to spend three or four sovereigns at the clock-mender's and the cabinet-maker's over it. But when a "grandfather" is in going order it generally goes very well. Of six or seven clocks in a house, the best time-keeper is usually the "grandfather." In a watch-maker's shop near the Strand, a "grandfather" has stood in the same corner for the last ninety years, and the watches are regulated by it still. As a weight-and-pendulum clock, a "grandfather" is almost sure to keep good time.

Certain writers on old furniture tell us that grandfather clocks came over to us from Holland in the first instance. But I think

that the export was, perhaps, the other way. At any rate, a clock with a Dutch maker's name on it does not sell as well as one which bears a London maker's name, though probably both were made in London. There is a kind of case which is certainly Dutch, however; it is coarsely inlaid, and bulges out in front and at the sides, just above the foot or plinth at the base. Yet the likely thing is that the first long cases were devised in this country, to hide and protect from dust the pendulum, weights, and cords, which used to hang exposed.

The earliest long cases had an "eye" in the middle of the front panel, round and filled with a bull's-eye glass, or oval and glazed flat. The earliest old cases also had "ears." The oldest cases were so narrow, only just wide enough to enclose the cords and weights, that openings had to be cut in the sides to give the pendulum room to swing. The next thing was to cover these openings up, which was done by means of hollow, earlike projections. So rare are eared clocks now that, although I must have studied 250 "grandfathers" at least, I have only seen one with an original eared case. Eared clocks date back to Charles II. or to James II. at the latest, which was before "Dutch William" came over and the import of Dutch furniture and furniture designs began.

One mark of age and original condition in a "grandfather" is the presence of the stout old cords of gut from which the weights depended in days before chains were used.

Almost without exception the oldest "grandfathers" are square-headed. Their faces do not display a domelike, forehead-like, semicircular projection from the top of the square face; that arch-dial (as it is called) only began to exist in Georgian days. Every square-faced clock is not a Jacobean or Queen Anne clock, however, though dealers nearly always dub a square-faced clock a "Queen Anne." In Queen Anne and Jacobean clocks the following signs, or some of them, are present: Metal face, brass or silver-like. Square head. The "bonnet" or wooden case of the head lifts off, as the "glass door" is *not* a door, not being hinged. The columns or pillars which flank the face are spiral. The wood is generally walnut, and walnut of such grain as cannot be cut to-day. Sometimes there is a band of herring-bone ornament round the panels (*see* illustrations opposite page 80).

If the maker's name is on a clock, you should ask the dealer or clock-seller to show you the name in the list of the Clock-makers' Company, which gives the names of the craftsmen and their dates.

What dealers call Chippendale or Sheraton clocks are often "**Chippendale**" older than Chippendale or Sheraton dates. and "**Sheraton**" These terms really refer to the shape of the Grandfathers. top of the bonnet and to the inlay of the cases. Chippendale and Sheraton adopted and adapted current shapes in their designs.

Oaken-cased clocks were plebeian when new. They were farm and cottage clocks. It is rare to find a chiming clock in an oaken case. The "black-oak" cases, highly carved, should be distrusted. They are modern, no matter how old the works put inside

them may be. About thirty-five years ago the "old oak" rage caused many plain oak cases that were really old to be carved upon, I know, but the colour in that case is brown, not black. The oldest clocks have metal faces. Painted faces hardly date back beyond the middle of the Eighteenth century; I do not believe in clock faces "painted by Hogarth."

**Oak Cases and
Various Faces.**

When selecting a metal-faced clock examine the cast brass ornaments, almost triangular in shape, which fill up the corners of the square of the face. If the casting is fine, if the design is graceful—above all, if you can see where the graver's tool went to work to chase up the cast brass—it is a desirable clock-face to acquire. The silvered faces, or parts of faces, ought to be engraved ones. Concentric rings around the winding-holes are another sign of date.

Do not buy a clock from which the bell or gong has been removed and replaced by "musical tubes." The better the quality of the clock you buy to-day, the better the investment for the sale of it later.

ABOUT OLD OIL PAINTINGS.

When the old gentleman in the skull-cap let me into the Georgian house that was to let or sell, the sight of the walls reminded me of many readers of *London Opinion*, who have done me the honour to consult me by letter about their "very old oil paintings, which *must* be worth a lot of money." For the walls of that house were practically covered with old oil paintings, such as none but an enthusiastic and a credulist would have got together. The old gentleman in the skull-cap must have bought every small old oil-painting he had ever seen for sale. Hundreds of them there were, hung in contemporary frames, from which the goldleaf had rubbed or was sadly fading. And not a single valuable or really able picture in the lot!

Even by accident he had never come across a bargain! But that is not surprising; the traps for picture buyers are perhaps worse than the mantraps in other collectors' paths. Nothing is more seductive, perhaps, but nothing is more likely to be deceptive and disappointing, than an old oil painting found in a minor auction room or a broker's shop. And there are so wonderfully many of such pictures about. Hundreds of my readers—nay, thousands, I am sure—possess or "know of" (as they write me) such ancient articles. They see a picture in oils; it is smallish, the frame is clumsy and tarnished, the stretchers and back of the canvas, or the panel, are dark with dust and grime, the painting is thick, plastery, and gloomy, the surface is cracked—*ergo*, the picture is old and *must* be valuable!

Must it, indeed? Nothing of the sort, sanguine credulist! Truth to tell, a picture may be very old and yet be worth next to nothing in the market. I should say there must be quite a million old oil paintings extant in the world. Professional and amateur oil painters for centuries have existed galore. Often the frame is the best part of an old oil painting; if it be carved wood—and if so,

you can tell it from stucco moulded and gilt by the ring and feel—a tap with the handle of your pocket knife or a cut with the edge of a blade—if it be a carved-wood frame, I say, the frame may be marketable. A finely-cut, large, old gilt carved-wood frame may sell for £5 to £50, according to the art and size of it. But the picture it contained may not sell for fifty shillings. Nothing is more dubious than an old oil painting when you try to sell it.

If you are buying an old oil painting, the dealer is cocksure of the artist it is by. If there is a windmill in the picture,

Misleading Suggestions by Dealers.

or a woman with a red cloak under a brown tree, the picture is sure to be a Crome—"an Old Crome," as the dealers say. If there is a white horse, in a landscape, the picture *must* be a Wouwermans; if a row of poplars, then a Hobbema; if yellow varnish gives a classical landscape a golden tinge, it is a Claude—or at the very least a Wilson; if all the colours of the rainbow have been daubed on, and there is little outline, the picture is "certainly a Turner." If ugly and dirty boors are dancing or boozing, why—"Teniers, and nobody else!" If a woman's head, and loosely drawn, the picture is by Romney! If a boy is turning up bare and filthy feet, then obviously it is the work of Murillo! An Eighteenth-century portrait of an Englishman is sure to be by Reynolds, a Seventeenth-century one by Kneller. If the landscape has ladies and a temple in it, and looks Frenchy, it is by "Watteau"; if it is a cloudy and vaporous affair, with a lake and some trees, then it is by Corot! I once examined a private collection of old oil paintings for which the owner had built a gallery as big as a chapel, and there was hardly a single genuine Old Master in the lot.

Plenty of people possess pictures which they believe to come from the brush of Rubens, or Holbein, of Rembrandt, or Gainsborough, as the case may be. The pictures **Copies and Forgeries.** seem to have the artist's style—the back of the picture—the stretchers, the texture of the canvas, and so forth—are all in keeping with the attributed date. And yet the picture in each case is merely one of the contemporary copies of the original which were made.

Or your picture may be a deliberate forgery. If so, it is almost sure to have a forged signature conspicuously placed where it cannot be missed. Bitumen has been mixed with the colours so that they may crack in a year or two, and give the picture a surface like a piece of Chinese crackle-ware all over. Or the thing has been painted upon a genuine old canvas from which the remains of an utterly worn-out or a worthless old painting had been removed. The forgery may even have been done on an old panel, the back of which may show the irregular scoop marks of the chisel which flattened it, in days before they used the carpenter's plane; which is often a test, by the by.

"Re-touched" usually means re-painted, though "re-touched" is usually supposed to mean merely "restored," mended, worn portions painted over, to renew and brighten

Pictures Re-touched. up. After a little study and with observation you can detect the effect of retouching; the new paint on the top of the old gives the flesh and other high tones a ghastly violet tint, and parts of the picture get something of the

hues of decaying fish—that is, phosphorescent. If the re-touching has been done above the cracks in a genuine old picture, the paint will lie across some of the cracks, filling them up partly. In water-colour pictures re-touching is next to impossible, whether later on by some other brush, or at the time by the artist himself.

There are exceptions to these warnings, I am aware. The safe rule, however, is not to buy a picture because you are *told* it is by So-and-So, or because his signature is on it, or his name is painted in black on the frame. An old oilpainting, no matter by whom, that is in fairly good condition, not much re-touched, and displays force, freedom, artistic spontaneity, and beauty, is always worth acquiring, and there are bargains in that way still lying around and waiting to be picked up.

Not very long ago a broker went about all one day with an old Dutch picture in a barrow, trying in vain to sell it to well-known dealers for £3. He took it at last to a dealer not so well-known, who, however, is a judge, and to him the picture was sold. The purchaser kept it a week, and then showed it to a famous dealer, offering it for £400. When the bargain was completed, and the money paid over, the famous dealer said, "I can't help fancying I have seen this picture before, quite lately!"

"Yes," said the other, "you saw it last week in a barrow, and declined to buy it for three pounds!"

REMBRANDT ETCHINGS.

There were four of us, casual companions unknown to one another, in the same compartment of a train which left Fenchurch Street Station one evening in 1907, and each of us had something else to read besides an evening paper. The man on my right was deep in the *Connoisseur*, the man opposite me was examining a book of old colour-prints, and the man in the other corner was reading a sixpenny review. These be signs of the times.

As for myself, I was studying *Rembrandt, par Auguste Bréal*, which can be bought at Mudie's for one-and-a-penny; and particularly I was studying what that excellent little French work had to say about Rembrandt's etchings. Because there are still a few etchings by Rembrandt to be picked up very cheaply—I have picked up one or two myself—and etchings by Rembrandt are perhaps the very best, as they certainly are the most valuable, of all etchings that were ever etched by anybody.

In these chapters of mine I usually avoid the not always useful biographical details with which some writers on curios pad their

**About Rembrandt
Himself.**

pages, but M. Bréal humorously reminds one that it is still needful to assert who Rembrandt really was. "There is a German book on Rembrandt, now in nearly its fiftieth edition, from which you can hardly find out whether Rembrandt was a general, a statesman, an admiral, or an artist. All that you gather with certainty from that book is that Rembrandt was a German, who very much resembled Bismarck, and that Rembrandt's favourite palette colours were black, red, and yellow, the colours of the German

flag. But we are unable to reach such heights of criticism as those ourselves," says M. Bréal banteringly. "For ourselves, Rembrandt was a Dutchman of the Seventeenth century, a painter, and an etcher."

So he was; and he was as much an Englishman as he was a German. If it comes to claiming national precedence in art, Holland, I think, may claim the greatest artist that ever used a brush and an etching-needle. Dwelling in Amsterdam the greater part of his life, which lasted from 1606 to 1669, Rembrandt van Ryn produced great things in art very numerous. As I came out of the Rembrandt Exhibition, which was held at Amsterdam in 1898, I passed through a hall completely hung with small photographs of the artist's various works; there are some 450 paintings, some 900 sketches, and about 320 different etchings of his known to exist to-day. The pictures sell for enormous prices, and the sketches are all garnered up already; but, as each of the etchings was multiplied by printing, in considerable numbers, a collector need not be hopeless of coming across an example of them cheaply now and then.

Let us see what prices a few copies of Rembrandt's etchings have fetched at sales: *The Goldweigher's Field*, £72; *View of Omval*, £320; *the Three Trees*, £170; *the Three Cottages*, £275; *a Village with the Square Tower*, £210; *the Canal*, £260; *the Landscape with a flock of Sheep*, £245; *Burgomaster Six*, £390; *Cornelius Sylvius*, £450; *Van Tolling*, £530; *Coppenol the Writing-master*, £1,350; *Ephraim Bonus*, £1,950; and *Rembrandt with a Sabre*, £2,000. Plainly it is worth while to pick up a Rembrandt etching if you can.

But can you? In the year 1905 Mr. Frederick Wedmore, a great authority, gave the not altogether comforting information that "an outlay of £30 may conceivably endow you with a good impression of one of the most desirable of the minor landscapes," but as for the *Landscape with a Ruined Tower*, "it will be mere accident if fifty guineas get it for you." However, "six or seven guineas—I mean, of course, when opportunity arises"—may buy the portrait of his mother which Rembrandt etched when he was twenty-two years old, and "the *Mère de Rembrandt au voile noir*—the lady sitting, somewhat austere this time, with set mouth, and the old full-veined hands folded in rest—never, I think, in its happiest impression, costs more than £20, and may very likely cost you a good deal less." Yet that one is perhaps the most delightful portrait ever etched by Rembrandt, by the by. But even these are not prices which a general collector can manage. The point is, can etchings by Rembrandt be picked up for a tenth of sums like that?

I am not sure that sometimes they can't—in England. They can't in Holland, and they can't in France. But in England we do not, many of us, appreciate etchings as they do abroad. And yet the English milords of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries were the persons of means who travelled most, and most carried back to England boxes of pictures, portfolios of etchings and engravings, and "cabinets of gems." And in the various ways to which in these chapters I have often referred, fine and

valuable works and objects of art *do* come into the uncatalogued markets here, and *are* picked up from time to time by a few people, who know a 'good thing when they see it, for a song. In the smaller print-shops and small dealers' shops you will sometimes find a small etching in a small old frame under glass, that is offered you for a small pound or two as a "Rembrandt"; and then comes the puzzle—is it a Rembrandt, indeed?

The Eighteenth century saw many close and able copies of Rembrandt's etchings turned out by excellent engravers, who did

**Copies of Rem-
brandt's Etchings.**

not mean to counterfeit, but copied for the love of the originals, and sold the copies in an honest way. Some of these copies were almost perfect renderings of the original, so far as any copy can be that. Worledge, the English engraver, who died in 1785, etched a "Rembrandt" landscape so perfectly that it absolutely deceived the greatest Rembrandt connoisseur of the time, until he discovered the jesting inscription which Worledge had placed upon it when he sent it to the connoisseur as a joke.

How may one know the old copies from the only a little older originals? The age of the paper, the colour of the paper, the thinness of the paper, the watermark (if any), the condition of the paper, the presence of a figure giving the number of the print in a series of honest copies, and the signature are all useful indices; but the best test of all is a knowledge of Rembrandt's technique and inimitable spirit and style.

To get that knowledge you must study a collection of originals. In the Print room at the British Museum may be seen

**In the
British Museum
Print Room.**

one of the eight great collections of Rembrandt etchings existent in the world. I shall not try to describe the technique and spirit and style of Rembrandt's etched work; nobody could describe it; it must be seen, felt, drunk in through the eye. When you have done that you will be armed against the most skilful of honest copies and the most artful of frauds. And even if you do not think of picking up Rembrandt etchings, go to the Print room and study them—if you love art—all the same; to do so is an essential part of a liberal education. Of course, photography and books like M. Bréal's can give one some idea of the Rembrandt spirit, but to see the originals is far best. I have studied the Rembrandts in the National Collection at Brussels, but they cannot compare with those we own in the British Museum ourselves. One should go to the Print room, and by attentive eyes and ready mind regard the etchings with the soul, so to speak, using the power to feel emotion as well as to perceive with the optic nerves. One should try to see the etchings with something of the intensity and concentration with which Rembrandt himself, looking at a seashell, a tree, a human face, a misty horizon, or what not, perceived and rendered immortally, in truth and simplicity, but in grandeur and in the spirit, the thing his retina saw. Almost all art lies in intensely seeing; and almost all success in curio-hunting, too.

PARTICULARS ABOUT PINCHBECK.

If you cannot afford to pay twenty pounds for a snuff-box or patch-box in old gold with a miniature let into the lid, or £350 for one that is set with precious stones and chased superbly, that is no reason why a dozen or a score of old snuff-boxes, bon-bon boxes, and patch-boxes should not adorn the velvet of your curio-table. For you can pick them up at five or six shillings apiece. Square, oblong, round, or oval slips of onyx or agate or cairngorm form the top and the bottom; the sides and the setting of the stones are metal that looks like dull gold, that often is finely chased and decorative, and yet is *not* gold, but pinchbeck. When such snuff-boxes, bon-bon boxes, or patch-boxes are old they are worth acquiring; but let me add that you can buy them brand new in Switzerland, and a fine stock of them is kept on sale at a stall on the summit of the Rigi. Thus, again, I must say, "Beware!"

In an advertisement which appeared in the *London Daily Post* of July 9th, 1733, several kinds of "toys," as the articles

**Articles in Old
Pinchbeck.**

made by Christopher and Edward Pinchbeck from 1670 to 1766 were called, were enumerated: sword hilts, hangers, whip handles, cane heads, watchchains, coat buttons, salvers, snuff-boxes, patch-boxes, shoe buckles, necklaces, knives and forks, spoons, girdle buckles, stock buckles, clasps, knee buckles. Watchcases also were turned out; *étuis* of all kinds—that is, small boxes and cases; *châtelaines*, for suspending from the girdle a scissor case, needle case, pencilcase, tweezers, penknife, nutmeg grater, and so forth, all in a cluster; miniature frames, *vinaigrettes*, or little square boxes with a pierced inner lid confining a piece of saturated sponge, but allowing its medicinal odour to escape; large ornamental watch keys, tall back-combs for the hair, ring caskets, bracelets, clasps, hair-pins, and other forms of jewellery set with tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl, or the cheaper gems such as amethysts and topazes, were produced in quantities. Christopher and Edward Pinchbeck must have made a fortune out of that weakness in human nature which induces people to buy for wear or use an "imitation" when they cannot afford to purchase the real thing.

That is why "pinchbeck" has crept into English dictionaries as a term of derision, indicating a pretentious sham. The reason why pinchbeck articles sold so well when

A term of Derision.

they were new was that they closely resembled articles in gold. Your Eighteenth-century gentleman must carry a snuff-box, a bon-bon box to offer to ladies, two watches, a fine cane, a sword, and a cluster of seals, but many a Georgian cit or *beau* on the cheap, with hardly a guinea in his pocket, could ruffle it at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, or Bath with shining shoe buckles and gorgeously-headed cane, tapping a gleaming snuff-box, and dangling quite a lot of burnished ornaments at his fob; the whole pinchbeck group having cost him less than one of them in gold and gems would have done. To the same human weakness we owe the supply of old lustre ware, that made a mug look something like gold and a teapot resemble silver, or, at the

least, Sheffield plate. Cheap imitations of various kinds are being made nowadays, of course, but the difference is that the old pinchbeck articles were so carefully made and worked on as to be quite elaborately artistic, and worth collecting for themselves, apart from the question of the metal.

For Christopher Pinchbeck had made a discovery; he had found that by mixing zinc and copper in certain proportions—

Looked like Gold.

probably three parts of zinc to one part of copper—he could turn out an alloy or amalgam that would polish up till it looked exactly like gold, and it could be stamped, embossed, and chased quite prettily. If you take three parts of zinc and one part of copper, and mix them to-day, you will hardly get the same result as he did, however; like all such trade secrets, some essential fact did not leak out, or there is some long-inherited skill of hand that the copyists nowadays lack. Yet I fancy that part of the secret was to apply an infinitesimally thin wash of real gold to the outside of the imitative metal. The Pinchbecks claimed that their ware was untarnishable, and some of it has remained untarnished to this day. Most of it, however, has dulled and darkened under the chemical influence of light and air, operating for a century or so.

I have often wondered why pinchbeck should cease to be made, unless the secret died out with Christopher Pinchbeck's son. The old parcel-gilding on silver was

Is it a Dead Secret?

very costly, electro-gilding had not come in, "rolled gold" had not been invented, and "pinchbeck" admirably served the purpose for which all these processes were devised.

There is a particularly attractive variety—I mean the ring-and-jewel caskets. I have one in moss-agate, an inch square; one in cairngorm, an inch and a-half by an inch: one in red agate, two inches by an inch and a-half; and one in mosaic of lapis-lazuli, agate, and onyx, three and a-half inches by two. They cost me respectively 8s., 8s., 10s., and 30s. These caskets are supported by knops of the same stone or stones, globular in shape, fitted to screws that rest by dentated fastenings on them and pass into perfectly-fitting receptacles affixed to the lower corners of the casket; the tops, bottoms, sides, and ends are slips or sections of the coloured stone, very translucent, which are bevelled and fitted into the setting very daintily. I have also pinchbeck snuff-boxes, *bonbonnières*, patch-boxes, and two match-boxes; which last are, of course, much later in date than 1766. These match-boxes make me suppose that the process lasted longer than we think, after all, and perhaps the old watchmaker's method and business went to Geneva; the brand new articles you see on sale in Switzerland are a very good imitation of pinchbeck, anyhow, and may even be the real thing. So if you collect "pinchbeck" be sure that it is old already and not modern. There is no deliberate forgery of it yet, so far as I am aware, though pinchbeck was much imitated at the time.

OLD BOOKS AND BOOK-PLATES.

About thirty years ago a Londoner, being in Dublin, saw an edition of the "Vicar of Wakefield" in two volumes lying in a bookseller's sixpenny box. He paid a shilling and took the two volumes away. Not being a bookman, he put them on his shelves and thought no more about them. But thirty years later he called in a valuer, for fire insurance purposes, and the valuer, coming upon this "Vicar of Wakefield," said: "This is a first edition, date 1766—I value it at £75." Whereupon the astonished owner sent the book to a famous auctioneer's, and it was bought for £92 by a famous bookseller, who priced it at £120 in his next catalogue.

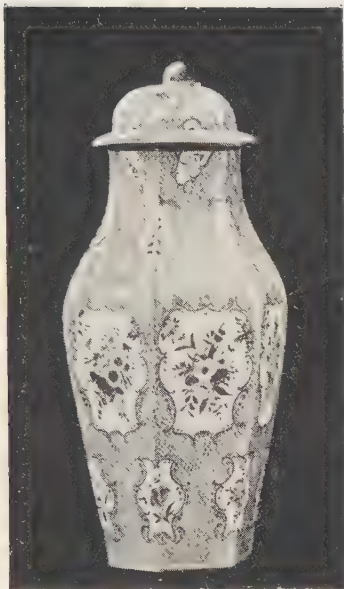
A good many years ago a Northampton bookseller bought for a penny a pamphlet entitled "The Exquisites," and catalogued it at half-a-crown. It did not sell, and finally it was sent, with other despised and neglected waifs and strays of printed paper, to a London auctioneer's. There it was knocked down for £58. "The Exquisites, a farce, in two acts, for private circulation only," was probably written by Thackeray; at any rate, the four illustrations to it were drawn by him.

"The Waltz, by Horace Hornem, Esq.," once figured in a bookseller's catalogue at 3s. 6d. It changed hands, and was sold for £1 10s. The next time it was sold it fetched £4. The last time it changed hands it fetched £86. For "Horace Hornem, Esq.," was a pseudonym for George Gordon Noel, Lord Byron, and the first edition, 1813 (not the 1821 edition, which is of little consequence), is as rare and as costly as radium to-day.

The glorious days for the book-finder occurred before 1887, when *Book Prices Current* (which is, so to speak, the second-hand booksellers' Bible) began to be published.

Present Chances. There is a good deal of luck in a book-find now. You may pause at the bookstall just at the right moment. A little earlier and the book would not have been on sale; a little later and it would have been snapped up by somebody else. Elzevir editions used to be all the rage, but, except for a few books, Elzevirs are neglected now; they sell at half-a-crown often. If you buy a rare book be careful not to have it rebound. If it is absolutely necessary to rebind a book, the copy is not worth collecting, as a rule. A lover of editions of Ainsworth illustrated by Cruikshank made a collection of them, had them rebound in morocco at great cost, and then found that his pains and expense had been largely in vain. An "original edition" to be really valuable must, as a rule, be in its original binding. Forgeries are not much to be feared in the case of books. But the first issue of "Bradshaw's Railway Companion," which is now worth £30, has been facsimiled, and the facsimile is worth next to nothing at all.

People collect book-plates with enthusiasm and assiduity, steam them off or cut them out of their position in the flyleaves, and mount them in albums or file them in portfolios. A book-plate is the label, more or less decorated, which was the mark of ownership of a book belonging to a gentleman's library. Of course, the



Worcester Pink Salmon-Scale Vase.
(Page 23.)



Worcester "King of Prussia" Transfer
Printed Mug.

(Page 40.)



Wedgwood Portrait Plaque, George "Prince of Wales," by Flaxman.
(Page 66.)



W. Adams Vase.

(Page 70.)

proper place for such a book-plate is in the book. It is a pity to separate them. Collect the books as well.

The other day I was offered, for a guinea, an album containing what purported to be forty armorial book-plates, loose. There was not a single true book-plate among them. They were pages of coats-of-arms, cut from old editions of *Peerages*, prior to *Burke* and *Debrett*.

Book-plates may sell at a penny, or run up into pounds. The value of a plate may depend on the art of it, the rarity of it, or the personality of the original owner of it. The "Gore" plate, a combination of the armorial and the ribbon styles, is so famous that it has even been forged. There are very few forged book-plates in existence, however. Kate Greenaway designed a lovely combination of children and an apple tree as a book-plate for the late Frederick Locker. Carlyle and Dickens both used armorial book-plates, and these are now very valuable. Carlyle's was a pair of griffins' heads back to back under the word "Humilitate." Dickens's book-plate showed "a lion sejant on a simple torse, holding in its right front paw an eight-pointed star pierced in three places." The Jacobean "Hutcheson" book-plate is hunted for, and there is a fine Bessborough book-plate, designed by Cipriani, and engraved by Bartolozzi.

"You can set your mind on collecting, arranging, and studying the book-plates of lawyers. You can limit that, and collect only the book-plates of barristers; you can limit your attention to judges; you can confine it to a century, a country, or even a county; you can strive to put together all the Chippendale book-plates ever made; you can strive to collect every portrait-plate, every plate with a ship, every landscape-plate, every military plate, or even exclude every aspirant below a general. Perhaps one of the most sensible divisions, in a small way, is collecting the plates of various members of certain families." Mr. J. R. Brown collected hundreds of plates bearing the name of Brown or Browne.

A book-plate may be valuable and interesting because of rarity, or the renown of its original owner, or the artist who designed it, or its connection with a period or a style. A date on a book-plate improves its value and adds to its interest. Some collectors only buy plates showing landscapes or sea-views, others only plates which represent the interior of a library or a pile of books; others only plates which contain portraits of their owners. Old book-plates of American owners of books are much hunted for. But every genuine collector sooner or later finds out his own "line" for himself.

GRANGERISING.

The table in the little print shop was covered and heaped high with neat piles of small copper-plate and steel engravings, aquatints, and woodcuts, carefully sized together, but poor in their art and execution, and priced very cheaply indeed, if any price at all could seem cheap for most of them.

"What on earth do people buy these things for, Mr. So-and-So?" I said abruptly.

"Sir," said he, "they buy 'em for Grangerising."

"Of course," said I; "I ought to have known that! I beg their pardon! And yours."

Now, what is Grangerising? Let me say the worst about it first.

"Mr. Ashton's book, 'Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne,' would be a capital book to Grangerise," wrote George Augustus Sala in the *Illustrated London News* of November 4th, 1882. That caught the eye of one of the slashing writers whom the *Saturday Review* employed at that date, and on January 29th, 1883, an attack on Grangerism appeared. "Grangerism, as the innocent may need to be told," the slashing critic wrote, "is the pernicious vice of cutting plates and title-pages out of many books in order to illustrate one book"; and in a very modern dictionary indeed I find this definition: "Grangerite—one who mutilates books for the purpose of illustrating others." Yet the purchasers of prints in piles are not book mutilators nowadays.

Fame and a degree of immortality are thrust upon some people, and Granger was one of them. Who was "Granger," the

**Who was
Granger?**

man who gave his name to a practice which most book-lovers condemn? He was a clergyman; he was the Rev. James Granger, and I

cannot find that the Rev. James Granger ever Grangerised books himself. That is the unkindest cut of all for him. Many thousands of book-lovers, book-sellers, and researchers, opening a volume, and finding the title-page gone, because it had a vignette, or some particularly beautiful or instructive plate vanished from its place in the leaves, have growled "Granger!" with curses not loud but deep. Yet Granger did not invent, or even first suggest, the practice of Grangerising. The *Saturday Review* itself had to confess that "Diderot was not only a hardened Grangerite, but as far in advance of his epoch in respect of the theory of book illustration as he was in respect of art criticism." But Diderot was writing books, and extra-illustrating them, and in France, as well as England, extra-illustrating was going on, long before the Rev. James Granger published his "Biographical History of England," in 1769, good man!

Now let us see to what a financial pitch the Grangerised book has attained. In the year 1901 there were six Grangerised books

**Some Recent Prices
for Grangerised
Books.**

which sold, at auction, for more than £150 each. Timbs' "Club Life of London" (seventeen volumes) fetched £500; Lysons' "Environs of London" (twenty-six volumes) fetched £335;

Pope's works (five volumes) fetched £365; Byron's "Hours of Idleness" (three volumes) fetched £238. The "Stuart Family Effigies" fetched £157, and Kemble's "Memoirs" (four volumes) fetched £131. Of course, "Club Life" was never published in seventeen volumes, or "Environs of London" in twenty-six volumes; it was the Grangerism, the adding of pictures of places, and portraits, and autograph letters of persons mentioned in the books which so swelled them out in bulk. The "Stuart Effigies" fetched only £17 10s. at a sale in 1842; after further additions, it fetched £99 in 1861. Six years ago it fetched £157. The value of some finely Grangerised books increases, that is plain.

In 1769, when Granger's "Biographical History of England" first appeared, in six volumes, it was jumped at by the extra-illustrators, who had not then got their special and technical name. Here was a glorious field for them—an account of all the people

**How Grangerising
got its Name.**

important in English History, six volumes of pages about such people, and one portrait at least to find, if possible, for the illustration of each page! Sala wrote (on the authority of an advertisement of the fifth edition of the book) that "at its first appearance the rage to illustrate it became so prevalent that scarcely a copy of any (other) work, embellished with portraits, was left in an un mutilated state." People had extra-illustrated before; henceforward they "Grangerised." To Grangerise those six volumes was not an endless task; but, imagine what it would be, to-day, to extra-illustrate the sixty volumes of that "Dictionary of National Biography," which has been justly described as "the greatest literary undertaking ever carried out in England." The price of a first edition copy of that is £66 to-day, but what would the auction price of a Grangerised copy of it be a generation hence? Something enormous. Yet think what would need to be done, for instance, to the part of the book which relates the life and work of Sir Isaac Newton! A picture of Woolsthorpe, where he was born, a view of Grantham, where he went to school, a picture of "Trinity," as it was when he was at Cambridge, a picture of his Reflecting Telescope, a picture of the Convention Parliament in Session, of which he was a member; a view of the Mint, of which he was master; a portrait of Queen Anne, who knighted him, and a print of his tomb in Westminster Abbey, would be but a fraction of the extra-illustrations possible and desirable. The work would be endless, no one Grangeriser could do it all.

You cannot *depend* on a high price for a Grangerised book, however. A copy of Thackeray's "Essay on the Genius of George Cruikshank," inlaid to 4to size and extra-illustrated by many examples of Cruikshank's early work, and some rare coloured specimens, extending the thin essay into two thick volumes, was lately sold for £25. The Grangeriser must have spent twice that amount, merely in buying the illustrations.

**Select Your
Book Carefully.**

The "Beauties of England and Wales," by Britton and Bayley, published from 1801 to 1818 in twenty-six volumes, going county by county all over the country, cost £31 4s. when new. Extended to eighty-six volumes by the insertion of 6,200 extra views of towns, castles, mansions, antiquities, costumes, monuments, and portraits (by Alken, Hearne, Shepherd, Turner, and Westall, among other artists), was lately on sale for fifty guineas only.

"Sir," said the printseller to me, "a lot of Grangerisers make a mistake. They take up a book like Southey's 'Life of Nelson.' Well, it's been done again and again, and all the good old portraits have been used up. Why don't they take up a book like the 'Illustrated History of Furniture,' and stick in all the beautiful pictures of old furniture that are coming out in papers and magazines?" Why not?

"Stick in," the printseller said, but, of course, you can't extra-illustrate much by 'sticking in.' A book to be properly

Grangerised must be taken out of its bindings and be unstitched. Page by page must be treated separately—two copies of the book

Inlaid.

will be needed, because of the printing on both sides. Each page, and very often each part of a page, must be "inlaid," that is, mounted like a water-colour, or, at the least, pasted upon a blank sheet of paper; and the illustrations must be similarly inlaid or mounted with the appropriate printed page itself, or, if large, on a separate sheet. Enormous work, and costly, but very delightful, no doubt, for a person of leisure; and then the book must be rebound.

I will confess that, to the following extent, I am a Grangeriser myself. I like to find a fine portrait of an author and paste it in among the fly leaves of the author's published works.

ACUPICTURA, OR NEEDLEWORK PICTURING.

From the wonderful landscapes in floss silk which are done by sewing-machinists to-day the history of pictorial embroidery goes back through the Berlin wool that our mothers worked, the samplers our grandmothers worked, the imitation engravings of Georgian days, and the bead and "stump" embroideries of Charles the Second's time, to the tent-stitched work of the earliest Jacobean period; and then, through ecclesiastical vestment work and the primitive tapestries, right back to the 230 feet of linen strip which Queen Matilda and her maids-of-honour stitched upon at Bayeux, to depict the principal scenes in the Norman Conquest of England. Here is a field for a collector indeed, that so far has been little exploited. The subject is not an easy one, but I will try to make it clear.

You will hardly come across any needlework pictures earlier than *tempo* Charles I., however, and you may know the earliest by these signs: the basis is irregularly-woven linen canvas, brownly-white and coarse; upon this the picture was done in silks, with that fine slanting stitching taken over a single thread of the canvas which is known as tent-stitch, or *petit point*. (The other day a friend of mine bought for a guinea a piece of *petit point* four feet long by one and a-half, which had been nailed on the top of a long ottoman.) You may know this earliest kind of picture by its resemblance to tapestry—tapestry on a small scale; and the hats and other items of contemporary costume in the pictures will tell you that they are Carolian or Jacobean in date; though this kind of picture work, modified, continued to be done right into the first part of the Eighteenth century. Examples in tent-stitch, however, are not so valuable in the market as those in "stump" and beads, of the kind which are illustrated here.

Rather late in the Seventeenth century the raised and embossed needlework picture began to be done. The stitch

**Embroidery on
the Stump.**

was mainly the one called "feather-stitch," that is, long and short stitching, the short stitch diagonal to the long one. And under this stitching a kind of padded or raised surface for portions of the picture was used. Stumps of hair or wool, and sometimes of

wood, were glued to the basal white satin, and the needlework was then taken over these stumps, concealing them. A fine example of a stump picture may measure twenty-two inches by eighteen, be *tempo* Charles II., and be priced at £75; you will see that it is embossed almost all over, that the costumes are Carolean, and you will note the several-times repeated caterpillar,

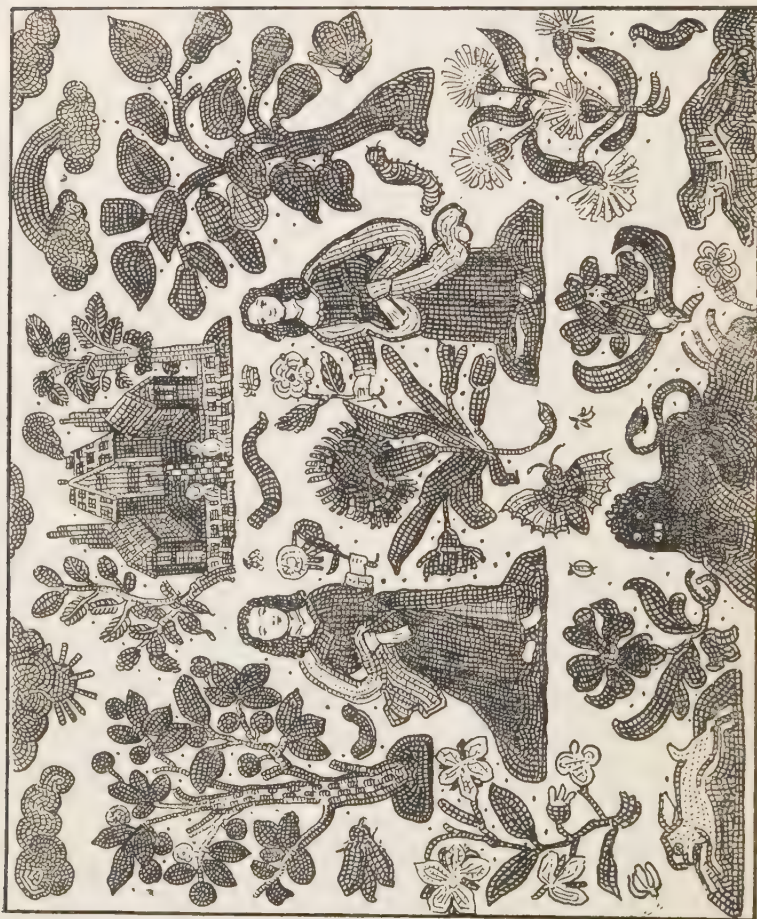


Stumpwork Picture, Stuart Period.

which was an emblem of the dynasty, and is now a mark of the date. Stump pictures usually represent the King and Queen, or some Biblical subject. All the known kinds of stitches were used; satin was the base of them; seed pearls, silver and gilt gimp, lace, coral, paste gems, spangles, feathers, and sequins were worked in; real hair was used in the wigs; elaboration was the note of the period.

Then there were the beadwork pictures, which immediately followed the use of "stumps." The beadwork pictures were little embossed, the beads themselves standing up sufficiently, it was thought, perhaps. The beads were threaded on long or short threads, as the case required, before being applied to the satin foundation.

**Beadwork
Pictures.**



Beadwork Picture.

The characteristic caterpillars will be seen in bead pictures; though so numerous are the animals in most needlework pictures of the Seventeenth century that they seem to contain a suggestion of Noah's Ark. Landscape backgrounds were often attempted, a castle was almost sure to be introduced, often there was a water-fall, and fish were shown in the overflow. Bead pictures have less market value than pictures in stump.

"Queen Anne is dead," but the revived tent-stitch pictures of her period still exist in fair number. They are flat, not stumped.

Queen Anne Tent-Stitch Pictures.

Sometimes they are worked in the French *chenille* on sarsenet or white satin. They were much better worked than the tent-stitch pictures of *tempo* Charles I.; the needlework men and women began to look almost human; their faces were often painted in water-colours on the silk, or on bits of parchment inserted. The subjects ceased to be so Royal or Scriptural—knights and dames, Watteau subjects, and so forth, coming into vogue. The costumes were often contemporary, however, and that enables a collector to give his pictures a date. This kind of needlework picture continued to be made right into the first half of the Eighteenth century; one of the kind exists which bears the figures "1739." Often the silks used were so dainty in tint and texture that the sheen of them, and the long sloping lines of them (for which the short single-thread tent-stitch gave place), produce almost a Burne Jones and Pre-Raphaelite effect, which is pleasant and characteristic.

About the last decade of the Eighteenth century a new kind of needlework picture began to be worked. Upon a piece of

Georgian Black-and-White.

sarsenet, lutestring, or white satin a drawing was made in pencil or sepia—sometimes it was printed from an engraved plate. Then this was worked upon, not seldom in colours, but oftenest in black, to imitate an engraving. Fine black silk was used, and sometimes human hair. If colours were introduced, the faces, hands, and arms of the figures were painted in water-colours, and only the costumes and other surroundings stitched. Sometimes a print itself was pasted upon linen, and the lines of the print stitched over in black. Stipple and line engravings were oftenest imitated, landscapes, châteaux, and so forth; though a little later it became a tendency to use coloured threads with these, and, in fact, to imitate a "stayed drawing," as the early water-colour drawings were then called.

Wool then came in for sampler and fire-screen work, upon criss-cross canvas; and fine samplers, if signed and dated and in

Samplers and Fire Screens, &c.

fairly clean condition, are rapidly snapped up by collectors to-day. The Berlin wool work, and the raised roses on canvas, which occupied our mothers, aunts, and elder sisters forty to fifty years ago, are at present a drug in the market; but time is lending charm even to that, and a far-sighted collector might usefully turn to them his attention.

JAPANESE ARTS.

Often when I pass a shop where Japanese colour-prints hang out in the window like laundried garments depending from a clothes-line, I think of what a French friend of mine, who is a great Orientalist, told me one day when we were together at the Huis ten Bosch at The Hague. We stood in the Japanese room of that quaint and charming old Palace in the Wood; we admired

the silken embroideries, the lacquered cabinets, and the Hizen porcelain which the Dutch East India merchantmen, broad-beamed and snub-bowed like the Dutchmen themselves, carried from Japan to Holland in the Eighteenth century, to adorn the little hunting lodge of Prince William of Orange the Fifth; and my friend began to talk delightfully of what the Japanese arts used to be, compared with what they have become.

"In days of old Japan," he said, "the feudal constitution, and the absence of trade as we understand trade, gave leisure to

The Golden Age. and pains on their work, pursuing art for art's sake only, not troubling about pecuniary matters. The Samurai or nobles each had his domain and his retinue of retainers, who occupied their abundant leisure in adorning the weapons which they had made and were in the next battle



Japanese Metal Sword Guards of diverse Designs.

to use. A few ounces of rice a day, a kind of dog-kennel in the courtyard at night, and a single garment sufficed for the material needs of those fierce old artificers, who had no occupation but their arts and crafts for many months at a time. There were no

wages to pay or rent to defray, and days and daylight for patient and loving art work were long and many in old Japan. From the Sixteenth till the Nineteenth century this social and economic condition lasted, and it was in those long years that the inconceivably beautiful metal work for sword guards and sword handles was done. The oblong, round, or oval guard of metal, which was placed at the juncture of the handle and blade of a sword, was called the *tsuba*; the knob or pommel at the top of the handle was called the *kashira*; and there has never been ornamental metal work of the kind anywhere else to equal the damascening, embossing, inlaying, and the polish and patina of the *tsubas* and *kashiras* thus made long ago. A few of them are to be picked up still."

"Yes," I said, "I have seen them in dealers' shops, and even the plainest of the decorated ones sell for seven or eight shillings. But a friend of mine in England possesses nearly a thousand of the most rich and beautiful ever made—a collection quite unique, I fancy."

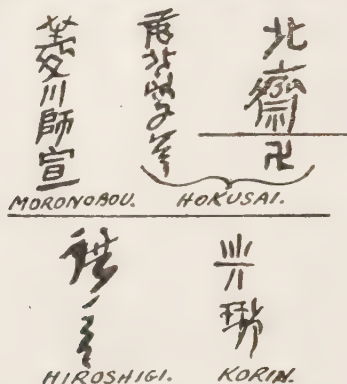
"No," said he, "there is one other fine private collection in Paris. In the later years the swords used by the 'private soldiers'—the Tommies, as you would call them—often went unadorned." And then I remembered that fifteen to twenty years ago, when the adoption of modern arms in Japan had become complete, many thousands of Japanese swords, with the *tsuba*, the *kashira*, and the little dagger at the side of the sword still adhering, were sold in England for about half-a-crown apiece. But those were not the beautiful old *tsubas* and *kashiras* that are collected.

My friend went on to say that it was in those old days that the best Japanese porcelain was made, and the finest *netsukes* were carved. Plenty of *netsukes* are to be had for half a crown to five shillings each in London now, and the darker the ivory of them the older they are, as a rule; but they are not valuable to collect unless the quaintness or art of the carving is superlative. "The *netsuke* was used as a button or slip-knot fastener for the strings of the tobacco pouches which used to hang from the Japs' girdles," my friend informed me. It was in those days, also, that the finest lacquer work was done, and the richest *cloisonné* and enamelling. Nowadays most of that fine art is over. Commerce has come into play; the artificers are no longer serfs or retainers, they must work for wages if they are to live, and wholesale cheap manufacture for European markets has destroyed the leisurely old craftsmanship, and coarsened the delicate touch which used to produce the old marvels. But there is one branch of Japanese art of which the finest examples are not yet all collected and made unattainable by people with only moderately well-lined pockets. I mean the colour prints. Wood engraving and colour printing from wood blocks was about the latest art to develop in Japan, and some of the finest things ever done in that way are hardly more than seventy years old.

"The three great names are Hokusai, Outamaro, and Hiroshige, and, if you come across a cheap print by either of them, secure it, it will be good, and may be excellent. Outamaro lived

from 1754 to 1806, and his prints usually represent the Japanese idea of a beautiful woman. Hokusai and Hiroshigi belonged to the first half of the nineteenth century. Hokusai was a landscapist, but also a book-illustrator, whose flowers, birds, fishes, and animals in general are fantastic and imaginative and exquisite to the last degree. He made at least thirty thousand different drawings, most

**Three Great Names
in Colour Prints.**



of which were engraved and printed one time or another. His 'Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji' really numbered forty-six, and his 'Mangoua' is called the 'Collection of Ten Thousand Sketches.' He was dubbed 'the old man mad with painting.' He was a merry old boy, but an earnest artist. Let me try to remember what he wrote about his art when he was seventy-five years old. It was something like this:—

"By the age of fifty I had published an infinitude of designs, but I am not satisfied with anything I drew before I was seventy. It was at the age of seventy-three that I really began to comprehend the form and nature of birds, fishes, and plants. When I am eighty I shall have made more progress, and at one hundred I expect I shall really draw rather well.' Yet nobody ever drew like Hokusai. His mastery of the tools was such that he could draw with anything—a stick, a cork, the claw of a cock—anything.

"Whistler learned a good deal from Hokusai. As for Hiroshigi, he is the most famous of all the Japanese colourists who depicted landscapes. Pick up Hiroshigis. But there was a Hiroshigi the Second, and his work, done since 1870, and inferior in colour, is often sold as the real thing."

Then my friend explained how the Jap colour prints were done. A cherry-tree trunk was cut into planks, following the

**Japanese Wood-
Engraving.**

grain, and not across it. Upon a block of this wood a design drawn on paper was fastened, face down, and the engraver cut according to the lines he saw through the thin paper. The surface of the block was endued with colours for each print, the paper being laid upon it, and the print "rubbed on," so to speak. In that way, also, were made the illustrated books,

the colour-print and the text on the same page. The treasured *sourimono*s (valentines or Christmas cards, as we should call them), printed on goffered and gilt paper, were souvenirs sent by an artist to his friends. But a colour printer was usually regarded as an artisan, not an artist.

"To-day," said my learned friend, "the wood-engraving is, perhaps, as good as ever, but the designing and the colour printing are inferior. Don't collect modern Japanese colour prints, unless some new great artist arises. For the last thirty years the printers have been using cheap colours made in Germany from anilines, instead of the hues which the great old fellows used to mix for themselves. But collect whatever you come across which bears the name of Outamaro, Hiroshige, Shiontsio, Moronobou, or, above all, Hokusai, if the colours are good."

"Are they forged at all?" I asked, and was answered, "Not yet; but the old blocks have been used again, with the inferior colours."

JAPANESE COLOUR PRINTS.

If ever you go to Zaandam and consider the little bridges over the little canals—the round single arch of wood, completed and made into a circle by the reflection of it in the water below—you will be reminded of the bridges one sees in Japanese colour prints; and somehow all Zaandam will suggest to you the Orient. The Dutch were the first to bring to Europe the wares, the spices, the porcelain, and the tissues of the extreme East, and something of the extreme East seems to dwell in Holland even to-day. And if ever you go into the little room at the Palais du Luxembourg, in Paris, where the pictures by the founders of the Impressionist School in French painting are hung, you will be reminded, or ought to be, of Japanese colour prints, and of Zaandam a little as well. For there is a close and interesting connection.

Half a century ago, Claude Monet, one of the founders of the Impressionist School of French painters, went to Zaandam. Being a Frenchman, he had hardly ever quitted his own country before, and ignorant, as nearly every European was fifty years ago, of the pictorial art of Japan, he saw no symptoms of the extreme Orient in the scenery of Zaandam. But, by accident, at Zaandam Claude Monet saw a Japanese colour print for the first time in his life. It is strange to think that that was only fifty years ago. It happened in just the most suitable place in all Europe for it to happen, at Zaandam—Zaandam, with its canals, its barques with prows that jut up like Oriental junks, its red houses, its green lattice work, and its tiny wooden bridges painted green and red; yet only half an hour from Amsterdam by boat.

A fat Dutch grocer in a small way of business at Zaandam had been wrapping up penn'orths of pepper and sixpenn'orths of coffee in squares of colour-printed paper that

The Grocer's Shop. somehow had come from the East, perhaps in the hold of the very same vessel which brought the coffee and pepper to Zaandam. All that the grocer saw in

the colour-printed stuff was a very queer kind of paper indeed, that would serve, however, for wrapping up small packets of grocery and so forth. But when the French artist unwrapped a packet of tobacco that had come from the fat Dutch grocer's shop, and saw the glory of colour and the perfection of form of the Oriental art which had produced the pictures on the wrapping paper, "*Nom d'un pipe!*" Claude Monet exclaimed in a passion of delight and admiration and wonder. He had never seen anything like it before, and what was more, he was sure that none of the artists he knew had ever seen anything like it before, either. For that was in 1856 or 1857, and the great political change which began to modernise Japan and open it to the Occidental world did not take place till 1868, eleven or twelve years later. When Monet first came to Zaandam, Japan was as exclusive and strange to Europe as Korea is to-day; that was a period when the noble Samurai, or feudal and fighting caste, were still in power, and their warriors and serfs and artist retainers were still doing their beautiful handiwork between intervals of warfare. Claude Monet's eyes dropped upon the thin sheet of crinkly but gorgeous paper with all the surprise and rapture of a discoverer's, therefore; here was a beautiful thing in art that was quite new!

"Where did *this* come from?" he cried. They told him, and off he hurried to the grocer's shop. He was not rich then, even

for an artist—he had recently been so poor that he once had to pay a picture of his for a meat pie—but he would spend his last penny, he vowed, to obtain other examples of this glorious and unimagined pictorial paper. He rushed off to the shop, and when he entered it his heart rejoiced, for there on the counter he saw quite a pile of the magical flimsies. But when he saw the grocer take the uppermost leaf of the pile and begin to wrap it about a half-pound of butter, "No, no, assassin!" Monet shouted. "Stop it, barbarian! Stay your hand, you sacrilegious rascal! I'll buy that paper of you, I'll buy the whole lot of it! Name your price! I'll pay your price, even if I have to pawn my shirt!"

The grocer paused, stared, and then grinned; for this must be a joker, he thought. Wretched paper like that, paper that was not thick and plain and suitable for wrapping up sugar! He picked up the whole pile, and handed the whole pile over to Monet. "Here, take the lot, Mynheer," he said. "I *give* it you—I don't like it—I prefer proper sugar paper myself!" Then he continued wrapping up the butter.

Back at his inn, Claude Monet examined sheet after sheet with ever-increasing wonder and artist's adoration. Among the

**Examining the
Find.**

best and finest of the sheets, those colour prints which he did not then know, and which nobody in Europe then knew, to be the work of Hokusai and Outamaro; among the delicate and lightly-touched-in pictures of fine ladies, women at the bath, flowers and fishes, demons, Fusi, the great volcano, scenes from stage-plays, sketches of sea and shore, and flowery trees—he came across one which represented a herd of deer straggling across the landscape, that seemed to him a perfect miracle of art; he afterwards learned

that this was a design by Korin. And that was the commencement of Claude Monet's famous collection; that was the commencement of Japanese colour print collecting in Europe. To-day one of the most treasured things in the British Museum art galleries is a *kakemono* on silk, painted by Hokusai, to represent "Demons trying the bow of Tametomo." For as most of Hokusai's designs were drawn for wood-block printing, and were, therefore, cut away, original work from his hands is now very rare.

So now when you go, as every art lover should go again and again, to the Impressionist *salle* at the Luxembourg, in Paris, you

At the
Luxembourg.

will see the pictures by Monet, Manet, and Degas with new eyes. You will note the Japanese influence in them. You will understand how Monet learned from the grocer's papers to limn in hieroglyphics, to indicate a high light without a line, to wash in broad shadows, to catch the fleeting moment of shine or shade, the turn of a neck, the poise of a limb, as Hokusai and Outamaro and Moronobou and Korin had done. And if you go to Zaandam, delightful Dutch Zaandam, you will see the birthplace of the most influential recent movement and school in French art—which is almost the only living art that counts, alas! in these degenerate days.

Now turn to your Japanese prints. The artists aimed at the faithful but impressionist and momentary presentation of a single feature—a tree with a few falling leaves, a distant mountain, a cascade, the pose of a body. No attempt to "paint right up to the frame." Nothing of a photograph about them. Massing of colour, shafts of light. Everything simple and bold, almost bare; there is a wonderful print by Tokoyuni, of "Rain at Night on Oyama," that reduces landscape to its first and barest impression. Yet all is charm, force, grace, simplicity, and truth.

Fine impressions of Hokusai and Hiroshigi prints have fetched £30 each. Good examples by the same artists can be had for £3 or £4; by the other artists named here for 10s. to £2. Less fine impressions sell much cheaper. These prices will go up. But many myriads of modern and inferior Japanese colour prints are issued year by year. By their defective colour and mechanical lines you may know them and avoid them. It was the loving and conscientious work of the rare old fellows, who took no thought of time and pay, which Monet and the Goncourts taught Europe to value and admire.

HOW TO KNOW A GOOD JAPANESE PRINT.

A correspondent, who writes that he is a cabinet maker at forty-three shillings a week, asks for the name of a book that will tell him how to know a good Japanese print when he sees one; and, further, how Japanese prints should be framed? The answer to the latter question is easy; the print should not be cut down or mounted, and it should be enclosed in a plain black flat moulding, not more than three-tenths of an inch wide outside the glass. But how shall I answer the first question?

I have often urged the importance of a collector's bookshelf, but I allow that the writers of books on art and collecting are sometimes very irritating; they so often tell you useless things, and leave out the very things which it is important to you to know. Their erudition ought to give them mastery and clearness in statement, but it doesn't always; often they seem incapable of putting their special knowledge into plain English and systematic form; they are so full of their subject that they "can't see wood for trees." And, again, they seem to write for the wealthy mainly; most of the pieces they describe are "museum pieces," and out of the reach of ordinary folk. I cannot recommend a book on Japanese colour prints to my correspondent, though there are several. But I will try to render my answer to his first question as plain and useful as may be.

The artists' signatures appear on Japanese prints almost invariably, but unless one is an Orientalist the signatures are difficult and confusing to read. Here, how-

The Marks. ever (page 122), are a few signatures, corresponding to artists whose work I have already mentioned. But the best guide is the character and style of the print itself.

A good Japanese print shows clear and decided outlines and other lines, drawn *currente calamo*, with a flowing and ready pen.

Judge by the Art in a Print. A good Japanese colour print shows these outlines filled in with soft, well-contrasted, and not violent colours, and a good deal of black, used in masses. What English designers call "balance" is seen in the whole picture; that is, the plain parts and the decorated parts, the blanks and the pictured portions, are something like equal to each other. A good Japanese print tells a story; the figures are not wooden and mechanical; they may be in repose, but if so the repose indicates mental action; if physical action also is shown, the print is usually desirable. In a good print the strokes of the brush which drew the design for the engraver were well reproduced by him, and the colours are cheerful, but not gaudy; they do not assault and weary the eye. "Always something *feminine* about a good print," a famous collector of Japanese work once told me, and he did not mean that the subjects were necessarily women; he meant that something of womanly grace and graciousness pervaded the picture, feminine but not effeminate. But "beauty of line" is more conspicuous than what Europeans consider beauty of face or form. A really good Japanese print has, further, an air of refinement; the hard, glaring, and vulgar colours observable in present-day Japanese work are missing in the masterpieces. Prints with the outlines of the face or other parts of the body *outlined in red* are excessively rare and desirable; usually the outline is black. A good early print often shows a certain roughness and simplicity of treatment. The qualities which one finds in a pen-and-ink sketch done by a great European artist—freedom, "first intention," no going back on the lines and touching them up, no unnecessary detail, an appearance of having been "dashed off" without error—are found in a good Japanese print also. Then the old work is vigorous, and the modern work is weaker—weakly pretty. The old blocks were deeply cut away, the modern blocks are cut

shallower, and that shows. For a good old print reveals the old Japanese habit of taking endless care and pains.

Low tones—the kind of tint called “Morris” or “art” in our days—characterise the good old prints; the modern prints are

**The Test of
Colour.**

flaming and flashy. The old colour extracts were mineral or vegetable, the modern colours are aniline. Fine old prints have a simple scale of colour—say black, blue, and a rich, bright red; or black, green, and buff; the modern prints often exhaust the whole palette of colours. Grey was a favourite tint with the old artists; it is too refined to commend itself to the modern men; one may say of the colours of the good old prints that they are few and simple. Prints a century old often showed a pale blue and a brilliant orange-red in juxtaposition, but often (and this is a test) this red has discoloured, becoming brown or blackish. The blue was obtained by steeping fabrics which had been dyed in indigo, and the red or pink from felt that had been dyed in cochineal; nowadays the reds and blues are metallic, and sometimes iridise. The old yellows were ochreous, the new have the tint of gamboge. The modern prints often show quite an ugly “Prussian blue.” Gilt upon a print makes it rather rare, by the by. “Lacquer colours” (like lustre), are found in the oldest hand-coloured prints.

Time has worked its effect on the paper of the old prints; it is less stiff and resilient than the new. Sometimes the old paper is

**The Test of
the Paper.**

seen to be goffered or diapered, by the use of blocks without colour, printing it into an ordered system of wrinkles and depressions in places; this was often used *on* colours, wiping the colour away, in a pattern. The paper of the modern prints is thicker, and the design does not show through from the back of the sheet so well as it does in the older prints; but the colours *do*, and more so. Thinness and translucency of the paper are a useful guide; the old paper is often rather tissue-like.

It is now or never; photography, the process block, and the commercial considerations which killed the woodcut in England

**Why Japanese
Prints should be
Collected now.**

are killing it in Japan. Already half-tone and other blocks are being used out there. We are within reach of the time when many prints, which were sold for a penny each in the streets of Tokio, will rank as collectors' treasures and sell for pounds.

ABOUT OLD FRAMES.

It should be a maxim with a collector to “keep the old frames.” Painting, water-colour drawing, glass-picture, miniature, medallion, engraving, etching, Baxter print, or what not, whatever you buy that is in a contemporary or otherwise old frame, keep it and hang it in that frame if at all possible; to do so will enhance the value of it, and will conserve the old-time air which is part of the spell. Unless the old frame is so absolutely damaged and dilapidated as to be quite past restoring, do not replace it by a brand new one; and do not replace it with a brand new one even then, if you can anywhere procure an empty old frame

that will fit. For the brand-new frame will usually "swear at" the old picture (as the French say), and you will find that in the reframing a good deal of the charm of your treasured purchase has been destroyed. I know certain wise collectors who seldom miss a chance of buying a handsome empty old frame.

If the old frame be at all susceptible of repair, repair it, or get it repaired. Mend the substance of it, if the substance of it is

**Mending and
Gilding.**

in a damaged condition; renovate the gilding of it, if the gilding be tarnished too much or too worn. Do not be too particular about the whole of a gilt frame being in the same state of lustre; a dull or a rubbed little portion here or there may be an honourable mark of age, and a witness to existence in the past. There are gilders to be found (in the older picture-frame shops, as a rule) who still know how to gild in the old-fashioned way—*water-gilding*, I think they call it—and you will usually find an intelligent middle-aged picture framer quite ready to get sentimental about the old frames which you take to him to repair. He will recall his apprenticeship, he will tell you that "they don't make such frames as this nowadays, sir," and he will be quite ready to take extra trouble for you, in no mere mercenary spirit, by regilding only those most rubbed or worst tarnished parts which absolutely require renovation. If it be the wooden substance of the frame which is cracked, or even missing in parts, he will splice it, or glue on splinters, or square a corner, and then regild. Or if the substance of the frame be "compo," he will make a "compo" of size and plaster-of-Paris, and with it mend and level up the defects in the old frame. Possibly, though not certainly, this may cost you a little more than a brand-new frame would do; but to put an old picture or miniature into a brand-new frame is like putting old wine into new bottles; old frames are, so to speak, the cobwebs and antique dust of the bin.

Similarly, if the old glass in the old frame is not cracked, or is only cracked in a corner, conserve it. Damp it, polish it dry with glazed tissue-paper, remove the incrustated

The Old Glass.

grime on the rims that have rested against the frame so long, and hang the old print behind the old glass in the old frame again. The glass, by the by, may be taken as a test of age; crown glass used to be the only glass, and crown glass has a perceptible curve. In the case of old miniatures, it would cost you several shillings to procure a new glass that swells up from the edge of the oval or circle to just the right dome-like bulge in the centre; in the case of an old miniature it is particularly desirable to keep the old glass. Repairing the old glass, however, is a difficult matter, and hardly worth while; this is especially true of glass pictures, and of the black-and-gilt glass which, so to speak, frames with an inner frame old coloured Morland prints or Bartolozzis, or the "black-and-whites" done in human hair or silk to imitate engravings in Georgian days.

The value of fine old carved wood frames is so well understood that I need not say anything about them here. Next to these in market value come, perhaps, the smallish oblong frames in ebonized wood or black *papier mâché*. Through the centre of

these a circle or oval was cut, to admit a miniature portrait or stipple-print, surrounded with an ormolu rim and faced with a

Some Types of raised glass. Fastened to the top of the
Old Frames. oblong was a *repoussé* copper, brass, or silver

leaf-shaped ornament, very small, which held the ring by which the frame was to hang on the wall. For an old frame like this, about five inches by four, fifteen or twenty shillings is usually demanded. Yet I know of one being bought with double ormolu rims, one outside the glass and one under it, and containing the most exquisite miniature of a gentleman I have ever seen (painted by Andrea Grazlia in 1798), for no more than seven-and-sixpence in all.

The old frames of pearwood which were made for glass pictures, needlework pictures, sporting prints, Morlands, and Bartolozzis, are in great demand. A glass picture is hardly saleable without one. Usually these frames are a dull black, and of plain moulding, ungilded and not carved. Small old oval gilt wood frames, for miniatures and little drawings or engravings, are costly things to buy separately from the pictures they were made for; another variety consisted of a stamped metal front to a plain wood oval backing.

The "Oxford" frames, oblong or square, with the wood prolonged past the "rabbeting," are not yet old enough to become saleable, but in a few years they will be recognised as befitting the pictures of their date, which was about 1870. The "rosewood" frames, fifty years older than that, are already sought after. So are the beautiful satin-wood frames and those of bird's-eye maple. The "reeded" black oval frames of Georgian times are much reproduced nowadays, but the value of the old ones increases.

Metal frames for miniatures, if old, have particular values, though they may not be gold or silver, or studded with brilliants. Such frames in pinchbeck, copper, cut steel, or even brass, are worth acquiring when you find them empty, and often you can cheaply buy one, with a poor picture in it, for the sake of the frame. Ivory miniature frames are of special value if old.

The frames of cut steel, pierced copper, and other metals which were made at Birmingham, in 1780 or so, to enclose Wedgwood medallions, seem about the rarest of all old frames to come across. Yet an oval or circular cameo medallion in Wedgwood or Turner jasper is hardly its own self unless enclosed in such a frame.

I suppose those snuff boxes and patch boxes which contained miniatures were themselves a kind of frame, and I am aware that in this chapter I have by no means exhausted the subject. For instance, there are the old frames made of ebony inlaid with stained tortoiseshell. But perhaps I have said enough to avert the needless exchange of the old for the new, and the turning into firewood of charming antique frames which, with a little care, can be patched up again, to last another twenty or thirty years, as the faithful companions of the pictures they were wedded to a generation or two, or a century or two, ago. There is something so homely, and yet so refined, about good old frames; they lend such an air of the past to the walls they hang on, that a few of

them will almost redeem the most flamboyant of wall-papers in the most modern of little villas. With an old picture in an old frame you can hardly go wrong ; with a cheap new picture in a Dutch-metal new frame you can hardly go right.

OLD BRITISH-MADE VIOLINS.

I am acquainted with a certain violin, London-made about ninety years ago, which for the last fifteen or sixteen years has been lying in its coffin of a case, unstrung and silent. One cannot do everything ; the thriftily-busy man *makes* time, I know, but he can't make enough time for everything ; not for business, politics, literature, connoisseurship, travel, journalism, and the wooing of that jealous mistress and queen of musical instruments, the violin, as well. Yet nobody who has ever played a violin with reverence, and felt the ravishing thrill of the upstroke, with its graceful turn of the wrist and comely curve, can ever fail to be interested in every old fiddle he sees. And there are a good many old fiddles which deserve reverence and affection still lying about, awaiting the collector's eye and hand.

I do not advise a collector to set forth to pick up instruments by Maggini, Amati, Guarneri, Stradivari, or even Stainer, however. He may find a Storioni, perhaps, that is worth £40 ; but a Stradivarius will cost him anything from £1,000 to £2,000, and perhaps to £2,500. The days of Stradivari collecting, except for the wealthy, are past. Something like a century ago an Irishman could pick up a Stradivari at Florence for £25. It had been made in 1690 for Cosmo de Medici, and is now known as the "Medici Strad." But up till 1845 it remained quite unknown ; the Irishman had stowed it away somewhere in Ireland, and forgotten where. In 1845, however, it came to light again accidentally, and in 1875 it was sold for £240. In 1885, sold again, it fetched £1,000. Its present owner has refused £2,000 for it.

Then there is the Betts Strad. A man brought it to Mr. Betts, a London music-seller, and asked a guinea for it. In 1878 it fetched £800. The last time it was sold the price was £2,000, or so. I do not say that there are positively no Strads still blushing unseen and undetected in London brokers' shops ; but I say that this is not a fertile "line" for a collector. "Strads" have pedigrees now, and are named and counted. The "Salabue Strad" ten years ago was sold for £2,000 ; its price next time will be £2,500.

No, the days for collecting fine Italian violins cheaply are over. But old British-made violins may still be found by a

Look Out for British-made Violins.

searcher, and bought for a few pounds. The one that lies dumb in its case, for reasons mentioned above, cost £3 in 1880 ; it was made by Davis, in London, about A.D. 1820.

The pedigree of fine British-made violins goes back a good deal further than that, however. There is a fine "Daniel Parker" fiddle dated 1712. "Duke" fiddles date back to 1760. Banks, of Salisbury, began to make his famous instruments (stamped BB in various places—under the button, under the finger-board, under

the tailpiece, &c.) about 1750. "Forster" fiddles (the fourth British name in the front rank of makers) began to exist about 1759. Then there were Norris and Barnes, in 1765; John Barrett, 1720; John Betts, 1782; Joseph Collingwood, 1758; John Dickeson, 1778; Samuel Gilkes, 1787; Matthew Hardie, 1755; Charles Harris, 1780; William Tarr, 1838; Richard Tobin, 1813; Henry Whiteside, 1770—and a few others whose dates entitle the instruments they made to be considered old. Excellent fiddles are being made in England and Scotland to-day, but they are hardly collectable yet; they are not "old."

You will understand that fiddles by such makers as those I have named are valued not so much for their proper use, though that is considerable, as for their age and source. In this, as in other lines, antiquity and rarity are the criteria. Collectors like the late Mr. Haweis treasure violins for their pedigree, the labels on them, and the other marks which sign an unsigned old violin all over. Dealers in musical instruments catalogue and price them according to their maker's name; for instance, fiddles by George Craske (who was probably not British, but worked in Bath, Birmingham, and Stockport in the beginning of the Nineteenth century), priced at £30; fiddles by Thomas Dodd (1786-1823), priced at £25; fiddles by Richard Duke (1750-1780), £35; fiddles by Daniel Parker (1712-1745), £40. It will be seen that to find an old British violin does not mean riches if you sell it, but may mean a considerable profit on an outlay of a few pounds or (with great luck) a few shillings.

Most of the old makers labelled their work by a slip or square of paper attached to the inside of the fiddle-back. The paper is now bronzed by time and air, often stained, sometimes partly missing at the corner of the label, and the printer's type used looks old-fashioned. But labels can easily be forged, and are only with difficulty seen through the S-shaped apertures in the violin belly. So that one must not rely too much on the labels. Here is a copy of a typical label, however:

**The Labels, and
Other Signs.**

RICHARD DUKE,
MAKER,
HOLBORN, LONDON.
ANNO. 1768.

Richard Duke often branded his instruments "Duke, London," under the button. Sometimes the labels were written in ink, not printed. Banks scrolls look weak, Tobin scrolls look strong, and there are other hints of the kind which collectors of violins should study. Generally speaking, the old makers used maple and pine wood. Forster sometimes used common deal. Whiteside used beech. The varnish of these old instruments keeps on very sturdily. Old English fiddles are, as a rule, rather "solid" looking—I mean that there is decision in their curves and substance in their timber. The interiors are slightly rough—chiselled and gouged, not planed, the marks of the tool being evident. The end blocks are rudely cut; sandpaper was not much used.

The Rev. W. M. Morris wrote: "I am strongly of opinion that

there are more genuine 'Dukes' in existence than there are 'Banks' and 'Forsters' put together, but they

**Where to Look for
Old Fiddles.**

are not to be found in dealers' shops. They are fossilising in dust heaps in the garrets of country mansions. There were hundreds of fine amateur players among the gentlefolk of those days, when the facilities for attending music-halls, opera-houses, &c., were so few and far between." A fine "Parker" fiddle was once found on the wall of a cobbler's shop at Ecclesfield in Yorkshire; it had been left, in exchange for a pair of boots, by a wandering musician. Sooner or later, if there is a good old fiddle in a small private house, it gets into the possession of some bandsman in the locality who plays the fiddle, or a local teacher of the violin; from him it sometimes gets into the hands of the local pawnbroker; pawnbrokers' shops are quite a good place in which to search for good old fiddles, though they have ceased to be the haunt of old china. I once missed the opportunity to acquire a worthy old British fiddle for fifteen shillings; it was lying on a chest of drawers in my bedroom at a Welsh wayside inn. I know a collector who always examines the instrument on which he hears a clever fiddler playing for coppers in the street. And I have seen very respectable old violins lying in dust amidst the miscellaneous gatherings of small brokers' shops, waiting for the collector, and still rich with "a strain of music, audible to him alone."

PROUT PRINTS AND DRAWINGS.

"Any demand for these?" I said to the woman behind the counter in the little printshop near Holborn.

"There's always four or five customers for everything," the woman said. "No matter what we buys, we can sell it."

So gloriously wide is the field for collecting, that every individual taste and whim can be catered for, and everybody may have a "line" of his own. "These" about which I asked the woman were mounted pencil drawings by Samuel Prout, and she had a pile of Prout lithographs in stock as well. Four or five regular customers came to the shop, she told me, to pick up "bits of Prout." Let us chat a bit about "bits of Prout," for Prout was *the* master in architectural landscape, and his is still a great name among connoisseurs, though his prices at auctions are not what they once were.

From a board outside a marine stores shop near Clapham Junction I once purchased four coloured Prout prints of fine quality.

**At the Marine
Stores.**

They measured eighteen inches by fourteen "all over," for the margins were full and uncut, and the prints, as a whole, were in perfect condition. The print shop price for them, to-day, would be anything from fifty shillings to four guineas, but the marine stores man did not ask nearly so much as that. I daresay they had cost him a penny apiece, bought with a bundle of rubbish. Yet, framed in narrow black mouldings and without mounts, such prints as these make the finest decorations for a landing or passage wall

imaginable. In small italics under each print is "S. Prout, del. Published by R. Bowyer, 1825." A considerable series of such prints was issued, first engraved in soft-ground etching, and then daintily coloured by hand. Anything more delightful in breadth and yet detail of drawing, as well as in softness and fitness of colouring, can hardly be found in all the range of colour-prints. Any one of them is worth a thousand "faked" Morlands or Bartolozzis, artistically. Yet the four cost me much less than a single sham Morland or Bartolozzi is sold for to the unwary.

But there is earlier work of Prout's than that to be obtained. A Mr. W. Clarke, of New Bond Street, published "Relics of Antiquity," in numbers, beginning April, 1810, and in a quarto volume, dated 1811. Thirty of the plates were by Prout. In 1813,

Ackerman published "Rudiments of Landscape, drawn and etched in imitation of chalk, by Samuel Prout," in three parts, each containing twenty-four plates. In 1813, too, "T. Palser, Surrey Side, Westminster Bridge," published eleven coloured plates, "drawn and etched by Samuel Prout." In 1816, Ackerman published twenty-four others. Ackerman also published several drawing books by Prout. Hitherto, the artist had found his subjects in the home country. But in 1820 he went abroad for the first time; he went to France in 1820, to Belgium and the Rhineland in 1821-22, to Bavaria in 1823, and in 1824 to Italy. To this period belong the coloured soft-ground etchings which cost me twopence each.

Now, any bit of water-colour, pencil-drawing, or colour-print produced by Prout after he went abroad is worth collecting, and why? Because, among the mouldering stones

of foreign church architecture, Prout found his true subjects and developed his genius. To study one of these Continental pictures by Prout is a delight. Under the Cathedral tower the *diligence* is preparing to depart; or close up to the Gothic portal of a church the timbered houses stand, with the open-air life of the Continent in full swing below; or within the shadowy chancel of a church, the Vesper service is proceeding, the white-capped heads of Normandy peasant-women bowed in prayer.

About the year 1822, Prout took up the then new art of lithography and "Prout lithographs" began to be published. In 1824

appeared "Illustrations of the Rhine, drawn from Nature and on Stone, by S. Prout," and, like nearly all lithographs of that time, these were "Printed at C. Hullmandel's lithographic establishment, Great Marlborough Street." There are views of Rouen and Ghent by Prout in the "Facsimiles of Water-Colour Drawings," published by Bowyer in 1825, to which my prints belong. Ackerman and Hullmandel published many Prout lithographs, large and small, during that period, but they are often coarse in touch, though worth collecting all the same.

"Jennings' Landscape Annual," for 1830 and 1831, contain fifty-two engravings of Prout's "Views in Switzerland and Italy." The early volumes of the annuals, the "Forget-Me-Not," for 1826, and the "Keepsake" from 1830, contain foreign views from Prout. These books, bound in green morocco, were published at a guinea

and a-half; they can now be picked up for a shilling and a-half, and very dainty books to collect they are. In 1832 the "Continental Annual and Romantic Cabinet" contained thirteen steel-plates after Prout, and a good many other books of subsequent date are similarly illustrated.

"Facsimiles of Sketches made in France and Germany," a book published in 1833, contains fifty lithographs by Prout, 18 in. by 12 in. Ackerman published another Prout drawing book—"Bits for Beginners." I bought in Charing Cross Road, for two shillings, "Prout's Microcosm, the Artistic Sketch-book of Groups of Figures, Shipping, and other Picturesque Objects," containing hundreds of figures, finely done.

For four, five, or six shillings one may buy, to-day, the pencil and Chinese-white sketches from which Prout painted fine pictures

**Prout Sketches
and "Fakes."**

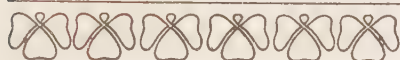
which have sold for £600 to £1,000. He signed his work rather often, and with a monogram SP, the bottom of the S making the top of the P. A good many copies were made by amateurs, and it is easy to paint SP on to one of them. So, beware! As I have already said, Prout's value in the market is no longer what it has been, but it is still sufficiently high to encourage a collector to keep a sharp look-out for "bits of Prout," particularly his water-colour drawings, because Prout is sure to "come up again" in price and estimation. And, anyhow, his work has a peculiar artistic appeal and charm of of its own.

L'ENVOI.

SO HERE IS THE FIRST BOOK OF ARTICLES COME TO ITS END—PERHAPS, IF COLLECTORS COLLECT IT, TO BE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER. MANY A HAPPY HOUR, AND MANY A WANDERING JOURNEY HAVE GONE TO THE MAKING OF THIS BOOK; I HOPE IT MAY INCITE MANY READERS TO COLLECT SUCH HAPPY HOURS AND WANDERING JOURNEYS FOR THEMSELVES. GOOD LUCK AND *BON VOYAGE*, THEREFORE—ALIKE TO THE READER AND THE BOOK!



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Weekly.

Edited by
A. MORETON MANDEVILLE.



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